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Contents

EDITORIAL PARAGRAPHS 667
EDITORIALS:
A Marvel of Chemistry 669
Russia Leads the World 670
Mr. Lamont's Duty 671
Down with the Critics! 671
"Strut, Miss Lizzie!" 672
1927. By Hendrik van Loon 673
IT SEEMS TO HEYWOOD BROUN. By Heywood Broun 674
COVERING WASHINGTON. By The Unofficial Spokesman 675
EXECUTIONS: THE NEW SPORT. By Edward Stevenson 676
THE BOSCH MAGNETO CASE COMES TO COURT. By Percy Musgrave 677
ANXIETY IN SOLITUDE. By Helene Mullins 678
THE KING IS DEAD. By Margaret Marshall 678
IS GERMANY EXTRAVAGANT? By Frederick Kuh 682
IN THE DRIFTWAY. By the Drifter 683
CORRESPONDENCE 684
BOOKS AND PLAYS:
Before Winter. By Lynn Riggs 686
First Glance. By Mark Van Doren 686
A Good Word for California. By James Rorty 686
The Quality of Grace. By Clifton P. Fadiman 687
Tragic Biography. By Ernestine Evans 687
Gauguin's Letters to His Wife. By Michael Fraenkel 688
Books in Brief 688
Drama: Papa Shaw. By Joseph Wood Krutch 690
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SECTION:
Peace Out of Russia 692

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CONGRESS IS IN SESSION and begins work by grappling with the cases of Senators Vare and Smith who were denied their seats and oaths at the opening of the Senate. With all respect for those who maintain that an American State should be allowed to send to the Senate anybody it sees fit, providing he is duly elected, we earnestly hope these men will not be seated. We are aware that this will create a precedent which may be abused—the precedent already exists, for the House of Representatives once refused to seat Victor Berger because it deemed him unpatriotic. But the offense of Smith and Vare in buying their elections (in primary or election) makes them as unfit for the Senate as was Senator Newberry, forced to resign because of the expenditure of moneys small, indeed, beside those contributed to the Smith and Vare campaigns by their political and big-business backers. Something must be done to stop the rising tide of corruption, and this is a first step. We are glad that the Progressive leaders will leave no stone unturned to bring this about. As for the rest, the Democrats who could have organized the Senate with the aid of the Progressives refused to do so. But the Progressives started well by their strategy in the cases of Vare and Smith and it is obvious that their holding of the balance of power will inure to the benefit of the people throughout this session of Congress.

GOVERNOR SMITH has at last spoken out on the prohibition issue, to the following extent: He correctly and properly maintained the right of citizens "to organize to oppose any law and any part of the Constitution with which they are not in sympathy"; he denied that he had ever preached nullification or that he favored it; he held that "enforcement of the law and obedience to the law were the very corner-stone of governmental structure," and he declared that the State needs no more laws to enforce prohibition. The last statement was in answer to the criticisms of him for having signed the State enforcement law. He also declared that he was one of the two governors who, returned from Mr. Coolidge's conference on prohibition enforcement, called the State-enforcement officers together and warned them to enforce the law. That is doubtless true, but he must confess that his warning accomplished nothing and that he has, so far as we are aware, punished nobody for official derelictions. As for his remark that prohibition enforcement is not a State question but one for every local community to deal with, that is nonsense. "Passing the buck" to villages and towns means that there will be no enforcement whatever.

BOSTON IS RECOVERING. A Boston jury sensibly acquitted nine of the "Death Watch" who marched in front of the State House on that fateful August day when Governor Fuller let Sacco and Vanzetti die. Some of them were accused of "sauntering and loitering," others of obstructing traffic; but the simple fact that they walked briskly single-file along an eight-foot sidewalk impressed a jury released from the hysteria that stirred the police in August. Only the police superintendent, Crowley, maintained the passionate excitement of those days. Testifying in the trial of Powers Hapgood, charged with "inciting to riot," Mr. Crowley naively gave his own case away. In his attempt to make it look as if a riot had threatened, he recalled that, after the police had hauled Hapgood and Cosimo Carvotta from their soap-box, someone in the crowd shouted "Kill them." Did he attempt to arrest the man guilty of this incitement to lynching? asked Hapgood's attorney, Arthur Garfield Hays. Crowley had not thought of that. The Boston police, his evidence showed, was less interested in preserving order than in punishing Sacco-Vanzetti sympathizers. The jury refused to convict Hapgood except upon a technical charge of speaking without a permit. Some day Boston will recover its balance so far as to hold Memorial Day meetings for Sacco and Vanzetti on Boston Common, and it may yet happen that a successor to Alvan Fuller will be the chief orator.

RUSSELL TREMAINE IS HOME AGAIN! By an order completely reversing the inferior court, Judge Edward E. Hardin returned to his parents the twelve-year-old boy who for two years has been kept in a detention home or boarded out as a prelude to adoption because his parents

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would not permit him to join in the flag salute at school. In an editorial in *The Nation* for November 30 the facts about the Tremaines, members of a non-resistant religious society, were set forth. It was pointed out that, at the risk of a slight loss of face, the State of Washington would do well to return Russell to his parents without more ado, as the most sensible and merciful procedure possible. Partly as a result of the admirable publicity campaign waged by Robert Whitaker of Los Angeles, who first brought the case to *The Nation's* notice, the State of Washington has done just this. Russell is to be sent back home; he is to be under the recognizance of the Juvenile Court judge of the district in which he lives, who will see that he goes to school. But he need not go to public school; he can attend a school where he will not be required to salute the flag if his parents do not wish him to do so. The Tremaines probably will not insist on the letter of their demand—that Russell be allowed to attend public school and at the same time be permitted to abstain from the flag salute. After all, the Government, with endless delay, has done the decent thing in this particular case; and it will take time to wipe out of the public schools the absurdity of an enforced ritual of patriotic devotion.

OPPONENTS OF BIGOTRY and violence in Alabama have not lost their fight merely because the attempt to prosecute floggers has failed for the moment in Crenshaw County. Attorney General McCall has shown courage and true patriotism in his course. Originally an officer in the Ku Klux Klan, he resigned from that organization and began an earnest effort to convict perpetrators of the numerous floggings attributed to members. Indictments were returned against thirty-four persons at Luverne, but after the acquittal of three in succession Mr. McCall dropped further prosecutions, charging that State law-enforcement officers had shown "a frenzied desire to assist the defense instead of assisting prosecution officials." He disclosed a letter said to have been written by the Grand Dragon of the Klan in Alabama to the Cyclops of the Luverne Klavern in regard to an effort to bring the Attorney General "to his senses." But one county is not all of Alabama. In spite of the attitude of Governor Graves, a Klan officer, there is a commendable movement in the State against the especially cowardly form of thuggery manifested in these floggings, an opposition assisted by influential newspapers like the Birmingham *News* and *Age-Herald* and the Montgomery *Advertiser*. We are more hopeful because of this awakening than discouraged because of a temporary set-back in one county.

THE DETERMINED EFFORT of certain groups to disgust aliens in the United States with all its institutions by subjecting them to various irritations, humiliations, and injustices is likely to be renewed at the present session of Congress, and should be watched by all who believe in a more generous Americanism. Some ten or a dozen objectionable bills which were proposed at previous sessions either have or will be reintroduced this winter. The McClintic and the Sosnowski bills both propose compulsory naturalization, while the Holaday measure, which passed the House in 1926, provides for the deportation not merely of a person convicted of a crime involving "moral turpitude" but of any one serving sentences totaling eighteen months. Such a measure, obviously, could be used against trade-unionists arrested in strikes. The Aswell bill is even worse. It not only proposes compulsory registration of aliens but contains a clause empowering the President to require all aliens to report at such times and places as he shall fix. By this means it would be possible to clear a strike area of all alien strikers. Whether one believes in more restriction or greater freedom of immigration, he ought to support the National Council for Protection of Foreign-Born Workers in its opposition to legislation which turns such aliens as are with us against our government and ideals.

WAGES ARE "HIGHER than anywhere else in the world or than at any other time in world history," and the American worker is more prosperous than ever before—according to Secretary Hoover's report for the fiscal year of 1927. Mr. Hoover divides the total amount paid in wages by the average number of wage-earners. Performing this very simple operation for the year 1925, the Secretary finds that the average annual wage for that year was $1,280. Never before, he concludes, has the American worker enjoyed such golden prosperity. A different view of the worker's status in America is presented by Profess Irving Fisher, who declares in the New York *Times* that although the national income for 1926, estimated at ninety billions of dollars, surpassed all previous records, figures of distribution indicate that

> More than 93,000,000 people out of 117,000,000 living in the United States in 1926 had about $500 of income apiece. These ninety-odd million people comprise the combined "poorest" and "lower middle" classes—they are 65 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively, of the whole population. . . . The "poorest" class alone, comprising 76,000,000 people (65 per cent of the total) receive about 38.6 per cent of the national income, or $34,740,000,000, less than $460 per person. . . . For the standard family of five out of this group of 76,000,000 "poorest" people there would be $2,300 income during 1926.

This income is $132 below the budget of $2,432 prepared by the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, which represents a "minimum of health and decency below which a family cannot go without danger to physical and moral deterioration." And this is our most prosperous year! It makes President Calvin Coolidge's warning that the "test which now confronts the nation is prosperity" rather more than humorous.

A SERIES OF ARTICLES in the New York *World* promises to show that a League of Nations committee report on the white-slave traffic has been doctored so that it will not hurt the feelings of the nations concerned—and, apparently, not interfere with business! The committee appointed by the League to investigate the traffic in women and children has drawn up a report on findings covering a period of two years. Part of the report rests on data collected in response to official request from the various governments; the more interesting and significant part is the result of some very neat sleuthing by the committee and the volunteer workers it was able to employ. Under the pretense of being themselves engaged in the white-slave trade, investigators were able to gain many interesting facts never before made public—facts which, if they are known to governments, are hid carefully under a bushel. These data were included in Part Two of the committee's report—and Part Two, the *World* alleges, has been suppressed by the

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League. If this is true, and if the League cannot think of a better explanation for the suppression, the world will be forced to conclude that the League is seeking to protect an illicit and obscene trade or—more charitably—that it is afraid to antagonize powerful interests which protect such a trade. The latter is probably nearer the truth, but it is not much more creditable.

IT WAS THE NEW YORK *TIMES* which in 1919 and 1920 reported the fall of Petrograd—which never fell—six different times and its burning twice, while the number of times it reported the Soviet regime collapsing has never been calculated. The *Times*, we understood, had become sensitive; it went to the extreme length of sending Walter Duranty into Russia, with the result that its Russian news was for some time the best in the world. Then, on November 30, 1927, the old, familiar habit-patterns reasserted themselves. A double-column spread in the feature position on page one, fully equipped with a map, gave Navarre Atkinson's account—from Bucharest, Rumania—of the latest debacle. "Five Thousand Killed in Ukraine in a Revolt Suppressed after Three Months Fighting," read the headline. Place-names and dates—all the details were there. A few days later, on an inside page, the *Times* printed Mr. Duranty's report from Moscow. The German and Polish consulates in the Ukraine, he said, had not heard of any revolts; the daily trains from Odessa—scene of one of Mr. Atkinson's uprisings—brought no such news; the representatives of the Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, whose colonies spread like a network through the very counties which Mr. Atkinson washed in blood, offered the daily reports of loan banks to indicate that there had been no disturbance whatever—save in the mind of the Bucharest correspondent and the foreign news editor of the New York *Times*.

THE JOKE OF THE YEAR has been played on the sober, serious-minded city of Winnipeg, Manitoba. Some time ago, as these pages duly noted, a competition for designing a cenotaph held in Winnipeg was won by Emanuel Hahn, a young sculptor who had lived most of his life in Canada but who—sh! horrors!—had been born in Germany! As most Winnipegers could see with half an eye, this dreadful fact rendered Mr. Hahn's design unfit for a memorial to British dead who had fought against Germany in the Great War. It was a delicate situation but the more stalwart patriots of Winnipeg did not hesitate, and they won over the protests of the weaker-minded. Mr. Hahn received the prize money, since he had been adjudged the winner of the competition, but his design was declared unsuitable and another competition was held, limited to natural-born citizens of Canada. Designs were submitted; the judges sat, and gave their judgment. A woman won the prize this time, a woman born in Canada, but a woman rash enough to be the wife of a naturalized citizen who had been born in Germany—indeed, none other than the wife of Emanuel Hahn! Winnipeg thus finds itself in a pretty pickle. It is forced either to keep on endowing the Hahn family with prize money, while refusing their designs, or to accept a design from the hands of one who has so far forgotten her Canadian heritage as to have married a Hun. We shall not be unkind enough to say that this is a lesson to overzealous patriots who show themselves lacking in ordinary horse-sense. But really, isn't it?

A Marvel of Chemistry

FRANCIS P. GARVAN, president of the Chemical Foundation, is the genius who as Alien Property Custodian decided to filch some 4,500 chemical patents from their rightful owners, in violation of every precept of decent government and American tradition, and to turn them over to American chemical industrialists. This was called "Americanization." By a "broad" construction of the powers of President Wilson, who was imposed upon by Palmer, Garvan, and the chemical industry, the Supreme Court sustained this egregious confiscation. What the Europeans had spent years of research and millions of dollars in developing, for which patent protection had been lawfully obtained, certain American chemical industrialists acquired by a simple process of theft, employing government officials and the shoddy cloak of "patriotism" to perpetrate the act. Then, in order to prevent the true inventors and discoverers of these products of science from again seeking to sell their inventions and discoveries in the United States, the chemical industrialists persuaded Congress, after the war, to impose an embargo against the foreign products. Salvarsan, the American patent for which is worth millions, cannot be introduced into the United States from Germany, because an embargo protects the American manufacturer, operating with a filched patent. The duped American public must accept an inferior product.

The European owners, desiring to save something from the wreckage and to win back the rewards of their brains and research, have decided to pool their interests and endeavor to reacquire what they had previously built up. The American market is still largely closed to them by artificial tariff barriers.

Now let us note how Mr. Garvan, the public official and industrial agent who "Americanized" 4,500 Austrian and German patents, greets the resurrection of the European competition in foreign markets, now promised to the milk-fed and patented American chemical industrialists:

> Is there an American whose soul is so dead as not to thrill at such a threat and menace as this combine makes against the safety and independence of our national defense, our national health, and our national industrial progress? The extent of the danger is easy to comprehend. . . . Don't make the mistake of thinking this is a dye fight, or a nitrate fight, or a rayon fight, or a fight for Asiatic or South American markets. No, it is a fight to reassert European . . . supremacy in chemistry and chemical progress, and that means German military supremacy and German industrial supremacy, and German supremacy in drugs and potential necessities. . . . Enlightened American industry, enlightened American opinion, and enlightened American legislation will not allow our betrayal.

Well, our soul only thrills with disgust that bunk and piffle of this kind can be perpetrated on the country, and that those who acquired 4,500 patents by second-story methods have the effrontery to produce such nonsense.

Had the patents really been deemed important in the national interest, they could have been acquired honestly by eminent domain and compensation. But the chemical industry seems to prefer a cheaper, if less honorable, method of acquiring vast benefits for itself, imposing the ignominy on the United States and cajoling the American consumer into the belief that his burdens in higher costs are borne for the benefit of the nation.

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Russia Leads the World

THE way to disarm is to disarm. This was Mr. Litvinov's bold challenge to the governments of the world assembled in the Disarmament Conference at Geneva. He dared them to wipe out armies and navies and air forces; to destroy all weapons, fortresses, military supplies, and all means of chemical warfare; to end forever all military training, and military ministries and general staffs; to prohibit military propaganda and military education. In other words, he proposed a clean sweep of the whole damnable, murderous business of teaching and preparing human beings to kill each other. He dared the nations to prove that they were really sincere when they called upon each other to disarm, and not merely bent upon the hocus-pocus of striking off one class of ships here or reducing an army by 15 or 20 per cent there. He dared them to abide by the commandment: "Thou shalt not kill," and to prove themselves Christians. To the Allies his demand was that they prove the sincerity of their pretentions that the last conflict was "the war to end war." [The full text of his proposal appears in this week's International Relations Section.]

Thus he took the ultimate position, and he has encountered exactly the fate which inevitably comes to a radical who desires to go to the root of things, to cut to the bone. He has been ridiculed, abused, denounced, and cartooned as bringing a Trojan horse to Geneva. The half-hearted sponsors of peace, the compromisers of the daily press who admit that war is hellish and then but a dozen buts so that there shall be no far-reaching reform, the embattled militarists and their followers who find themselves facing the possibility that they may lose their jobs, the defenders of war as an end and a glory in itself—all have joined to deride this preposterous suggestion. Litvinov, they say, is obviously insincere; does not the Soviet regime exist only because it uses military force against its enemies? He is again insincere in thus challenging the nations because he knows that what he suggests is a counsel of perfection, an impractical, visionary proposal which no one would or could accept—he would be the first to have his withers wrung if it were accepted. It was a skilful dialectician's trick to put the other nations in the wrong. It was a superbly clever piece of propaganda to put Russia into the forefront at Geneva and it was at the same moment an incredibly stupid act, because it immediately united against her once more all the nations around the Council. It was an idle gesture and, having made it, Litvinov might now be expected to get down to business and join in the task of lopping off a battleship here and a regiment there.

Thus run the comments—and so they would run if in any other field of action the Russians or anyone else should produce a plan which really meant something, which really struck seriously at vested interests. That this is what the armies and navies have become was stated clearly by Lord Robert Cecil—we quoted him last week as saying that "every month we delay, the old vested interests, material and moral, strengthen their hold." Of course they do. Each month the great economic interests encourage the upbuilding of armaments and carry on the trade rivalries that lead directly to war. They are the great propagandists against disarmament; they fan the flames of nationalism even while they organize international trusts and consortiums; they demand large standing armies in order to maintain the social and economic status quo; they want to be armed against any domestic uprising. They want armies to protect themselves—as if arms would help against the Russian economic doctrines. If Russia disarmed by herself, a large part of our press would still be picturing the Soviets as planning some night to murder our women and children in their beds. Why not? The press is largely in the hands of the masters of capital whom Woodrow Wilson termed the "masters of America." Why should it not have greeted Litvinov's proposals precisely as it did?

Exactly the same would its reaction have been if Jesus Christ himself had appeared at Geneva to read this radical peace proposal to the conference. He, too, would have been portrayed as a designing long-haired Jew, or at best as a wild-eyed fanatic, dangerous to the world because he preached the impossible. Do not all who demand the ideal make far more difficult the paths of the "practical" statesmen who, with their feet on the ground, seek to approach each goal by one "rational" step after another, not, as the cant runs, "going too far and too fast for public opinion"? Well, for ourselves, we care little for these critical comments, and we care at this hour very little for the motives of M. Litvinov. It may all have been a clever trick. It *was* a clever maneuver, but we deem it a very great service to humanity. It is always dangerous to let loose a new idea in the world, and there are millions of people, many of them bearing upon their bodies the scars of the last conflict, who will never forget that one great government has made this proposal of complete and absolute abolition of the obscene institution of war. They wil continue to ask themselves why this ideal is not attainable. They will find no other answers to their question but the stubbornness of those vested interests, the army and navy and the munition-makers, and the other profiteers by war, and the masses of compromisers and casuists who year in and year out throw cold water upon any proposal which would advance the interests of the masses of mankind.

Litvinov has shot one of those arrows into the air that fall no man knows where. The Disarmament Conference can never meet again without having the ultimate goal plainly in view. They may trim and compromise and shillyshally all they please, but whether they like it or not the final objective will be there before them and they cannot gainsay it. It is, of course, too much to hope that in this Christian America there will be an articulate body of opinion to support so radical a demand. From all sides we hear that the whispering campaign against the Russians gains ground day by day. In women's clubs, meetings of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and elsewhere there is, we learn, an almost sadistic dwelling upon the horrors of Bolshevik rule. Before us lies a screed from a citizen of Washington, D. C., declaring that England, France, and Germany have all been won over by the Soviets to a secret agreement to destroy the United States! To such as these the Litvinov move will be but the voice of Jacob.

For ourselves we welcome with all our hearts the Russian proposals. It is our deliberate judgment that if persisted in they will give to the Soviets the moral leadership of the world.

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Mr. Lamont's Duty

MR. THOMAS W. LAMONT, of J. P. Morgan and Company, accompanied by Martin Egan of the same firm, and Jeremiah Smith, Jr., sailed for Japan in September. Business, they told the New York *Times*, had nothing to do with the trip, there were no loans involved, and social activities were to take up all of their time in Japan. But before they were on shipboard rumors began to fly. While they were engaged in social activities the rumors soared and roared around the China Sea. Mr. Lamont was insisting upon America's equal right with Japan to finance new railroads in Manchuria; Mr. Lamont was negotiating loans to finance Japanese expansion in Manchuria; Mr. Lamont was to help develop Japanese hydro-electric power; Mr. Lamont was supporting a Japanese plan to crush Russian influence in Northern Manchuria—there was hardly any Far Eastern program with which some rumor-monger did not identify Mr. Lamont.

Upon his return to America the newspapers carried reports that Mr. Lamont had visited the State Department to inquire whether it had any objections to his lending $40,000,000 to the South Manchurian Railway; and it was indicated that the State Department had none. It would object to any proposal to assist the Japanese in closing the Manchurian markets, but so long as the open door was maintained it washed its hands of Mr. Lamont's private business. The State Department was in a difficult position. Its policy of visaing loans gets it into ever deeper water. It could not veto Mr. Lamont's loan proposals without seeming to commit an openly unfriendly act against Japan; yet it cannot wash its hands as clean of the loan as it wishes. Willy-nilly, its failure to veto must seem to mean approval of the proposed loan, and it thereby commits the United States in perilous fashion.

Manchuria is the battlefield of a silent diplomatic war in Asia, and gloomy prophets predict that it may soon be the field of open international war. Mr. Lamont may think that his actions as an individual, or as partner in a banking firm, or as trustee for investors, do not commit his country; unfortunately, an international banker is sometimes more significant as an emissary than the appointed ambassador. All China is united in protest against the loan proposal; and it holds the United States Government responsible. Issue of the loan, the Nanking Government says, would be an unfriendly act; and Yang Yu-ting, chief of Chang Tso-lin's staff, second most important man in the Northern Government, says that "the Chinese people will consider it a provocative act and will hold the American Government and people responsible."

This may seem much ado about a commercial loan. But the South Manchurian Railway is more than a commercial institution. It dominates Manchuria, and the Japanese Government owns 50 per cent of its stock. It owns the Fushan collieries, whence Japan draws six million tons of coal each year—nearly half of China's total production. It owns the Anshan iron works, of which Japan has high hopes. It maintains an elaborate system of schools and hospitals, and the Japanese Government polices the railway zone with its soldiers. In recent years it has financed and managed some extensions of railway lines for the Chinese, and conducted others on its own initiative. Some of these are commercial; others are largely strategic—intended to facilitate cutting the Trans-Siberian railway in case of war with Russia. This railway's president, who is the highest Japanese governmental official in Manchuria, has just said that Japan

> has in Manchuria her first line of defense. She does not want war, in fact she is eager to preserve peace; but strategic reasons form one benefit which she derives from her presence in Manchuria.

Japanese statesmen have lately been loud in proclaiming Japan's "special position" in Manchuria—a phrase unpleasantly reminiscent of the talk of her diplomats in the years preceding the annexation of Korea. Recently she has been objecting to the construction of Chinese railway lines parallel to the South Manchurian, on the ground of an alleged secret protocol to the 1905 treaty, the text of which has never been published and the authenticity of which is denied by the Chinese.

To lend money to such an organization, in the present inflammable state of the Far East, is almost an act of war. It is an insult to China and a provocation to Russia. No matter what the size of the loan, whether it be used for refunding operations, for repair of old lines or construction of new ones, its psychological effect will be immediate and sure. Whatever the State Department and Mr. Lamont may say, such a loan will be regarded in Japan, China, and Russia as notice to the world that the United States supports the new "positive policy" of Japan in Manchuria and that we are abandoning our long support of the principle of the territorial integrity of China.

In this matter Mr. Lamont cannot act as a private individual. Mr. Coolidge has declared that

> Our government has certain rights over and certain duties toward our own citizens and their property wherever they may be located. The person and property of a citizen are a part of the general domain of the nation, even when abroad.

He and the Administration, by their active support of foreign investors, have bound Mr. Lamont's hands. He cannot act without committing the United States. In these circumstances, he has a patriotic duty to perform. He and his firm owe it to their country to drop the South Manchurian loan.

Down With the Critics!

IT appears that this year the dramatic critics of Paris have been more cantankerous than usual. They have shown a remarkable unanimity in damning everything that comes upon the boards, and the theatrical managers, more interested in profits than in art, are talking rebellion. Why, they ask, should they entertain such ungrateful guests or give free tickets to men who do nothing except endeavor to persuade others to stay from the theaters? First-nighters, they say, should be abolished, but with characteristic French humor they suggest that the critics shall come to the fiftieth performance of every play that continues to exist long enough to have one. Thus the duties of the reviewer will be lightened and, of course, the public will already have decided for itself whether it likes the performance or not without the benefit of advice from the professional and theoretically jaded critic.

Now the opinion which the business man of the theater holds concerning the value of dramatic criticism is neither very fixed nor wholly dispassionate. One year he may al-

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most succeed in persuading the public that all play reviewers are fools or worse, but next year when Smith of the *Morning Scandal* says (as he is pretty certain to say) that somebody or other is the American Duse, then the manager cannot resist the temptation to nullify all he has previously said by proudly flaunting the "authoritative" opinion of Mr. Smith in the face of the public. Mr. Nathan, if memory serves, was once and for a time barred, i.e., refused free tickets, from certain theaters but though Mr. Nathan is notoriously the most rough-spoken of all American critics there is not a manager in New York who would not treasure and exploit any phrase of his which happened to be laudatory even if it had to be extracted from a column of vituperation and slightly misquoted to boot. Whatever managers say, they always act as though criticism were important, and they will not persuade the public that critical disparagement is nonsense as long as they treat critical praise as significant.

The truth of the matter is, of course, that half the theaters in New York would have to close down if the newspapers and magazines stopped talking about plays. The commercial theater exists largely by virtue of the fact that it is a recognized social institution and, like baseball, it is a recognized institution because the newspapers assume that it is. The most important thing that the manager gets in money value in return for his free tickets is general publicity for the theater as an institution and he could not possibly get along without it. In half the individual cases the critics may do his play more harm than good. In half the others he might have been just as successful if the individual play in question had never been mentioned by the press. But if plays in general were not talked about or written about, people would not go to the theater one-half as much as they do. The critics take plays seriously, the newspapers and magazines give the critics space in which to express their opinions, and the general public is not allowed to forget that the theater exists. Popular opinion to the contrary, damnation is not "good advertisement" for the play that the critics damn; but in the long run such damnation is good advertisement for the theater as a whole.

"Strut, Miss Lizzie!"

THE international event of the moment is not, we regret to say, the Russian proposal to disarm instead of talking about it. Editorial writers may be stirred about such matters; diplomats may consider them solemnly or otherwise over their cigars. But the people—the people in Oshkosh and Hoboken, in Sauk Center, in San Francisco and New York, the people in China and Japan and London and Paris are agog over the new Ford car!

Never was publicity story so adroitly managed. A dozen times during the past few months alleged details about the new car slipped out and were duly featured on the front pages of the newspapers. Each time solemn denials came from Edsel Ford, from the Ford plant in Detroit, from the great man himself. Yet the stories persisted: the car was to have a standard gear-shift and four-wheel brakes; it was to look just like the old one, only funnier; it was to be equipped with every sort of modern trick and contrivance; it was to double its price. It was rumored that behind a ten-foot fence in Detroit managers of the Ford plant were tearing around at sixty-five miles an hour; a fortnight ago pirated pictures of the new car were printed in the New York papers, pictures obtained by stealth by the enterprising editor of the *Weekly Argus* of Bridgeton, Michigan. And Edsel merely shook his head or his finger and refused to be quoted.

Yet it is doubtful if any amount of publicity, managed by ever so masterful a hand, could have produced the enormous interest that the plain people feel in the new car. Fifteen million of them have bought Fords. They have driven the old bus downhill past Packards and uphill behind everything else; they have driven in rain and snow and over the thawing roads of March; they have mended a door with a piece of string, they have cursed at side-curtains that never came near to fitting, they have thrust a nail in to hold something that an honest bolt would have held better; they have loaded the old Ford high with farm produce, mattresses, baby carriages, 300-pound hogs, and with whatever handicap they have managed to get from where they started to where they wanted to go. It has been pointed out that men called the Ford car "she." Only when a tool with which man is served comes very near his heart does he deal with it so familiarly. The sailing ship, proud under its white canvas, was "she", the old horse plodding through mud or sun; "she's a nice blade," says the woodsman of his favorite ax; and a pet cat or dog, whatever its sex, may be "she."

Out of this affection born of common use it is not strange that all America should be breathless to hear the real details at last, or that 375,000 advance orders for the new car should have been placed. But when we read in the China *Weekly Review* (Shanghai) that the new Ford will not be ready in October as previously announced or when we hear that buses are running up to London to places where the cars are on exhibition (admission 1/6) we realize that the whole world is cocking a respectful ear in the direction of Miss Lizzie Ford, U. S. A. And for all our rough familiarity with Lizzie, for all the jokes that have been cracked at her expense, and all the abuse she has suffered from the owners of "real cars," there is something colossal in the spectacle of a little man in Detroit, Michigan, who out of his own head, whatever else may be lacking in that same head, drew an idea which has won the hearts of millions. Henry Ford did not invent the automobile; but he made it a success as no other man in the world has done. Incidentally he has made money by the hundred million; but only incidentally. The money can mean little to him—there is too much of it and his ideas of how to spend it are too elementary. But he has his fun all the same. And because of it, we have ours.

During the last quarter of a century machines have been carried to the farthest village in the country. Telephones, the telegraph, mechanical devices for the home and the barn. Yet what man thinks tenderly of his cream separator? And who looks on a telephone except with impatience and contumely? Henry Ford went with the machine wave that washed from one end of the country to the other and spread across two oceans, east and west. He alone won the hearts of his customers; and his product, even radically altered, is welcomed eagerly and affectionately—even though it means standing in a long line in the pouring rain to get the first sight of it, as last week it did—instead of with the suspicion and distrust that greets most new-fangled mechanical devices.

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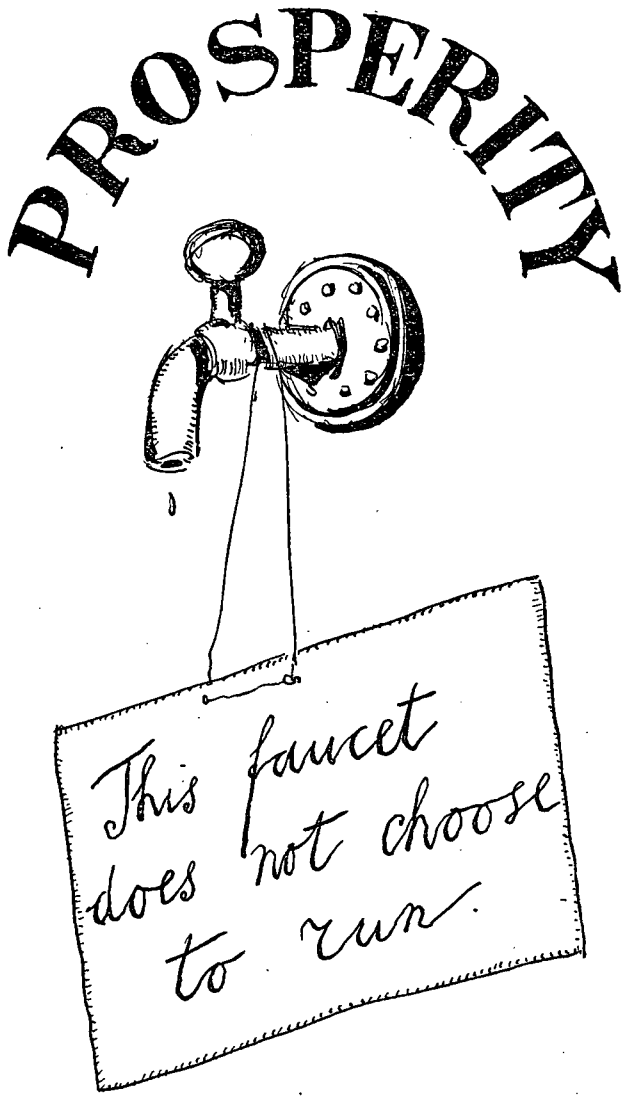

1927

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It Seems To Heywood Broun

THERE was the tragedy of Tilden, and later many wept for Dempsey when he tried to come back and faltered in mid-journey. But my tears are reserved for Capablanca. I could endure the fact that Alexander Alekhine is now chess champion of all the world. It was the reasons given by the old master for his downfall which wrung my withers. "We are not," he said in writing for the New York *Times*, "as strong as we were a few years ago, although we know more and play with greater confidence. . . . It is evident to us that in the future if we wish to succeed in any such enterprise we shall have to enter the arena fully prepared both physically and mentally and lead the kind of life that will keep us in the best condition, since we possess no longer . . . the great resisting power that formerly carried us through on so many occasions."

Pity is a kind of recognition; the defeat of this old man I could take calmly enough as long as I had the image of a palsied one who reached for the queen and in myopia seized a bishop. It was a later biographical note which set his tribulations at my doorstep: "José Raul Capablanca," I read, "was born in Havana, November 19, 1888—." Come! come! a few murrains and perhaps perdition! The man is my senior by precisely eighteen days. Straightway I leaped from bed and sought to touch my toes one hundred times. José Raul Capablanca has said it. We are not the men we used to be.

But all this is a tragedy so distinctly personal that I should scarcely mention it but for attendant implications. At thirty-nine the taller Alps, chess, and the Channel must be abandoned. As the flesh fades a gem-like joy of purest spirit rises. At least so I have been told by sages who were ancient. But no! A skinny hand waves me away and mockingly an icy voice says, "Check." I quote again from Capablanca: "Of late we have lost a great deal of the love for the game because we consider it as coming to an end exceedingly fast. . . . The artistic part of chess—the combination—has been practically killed by the enormous strides made in the technical knowledge of the openings, generally leading the game into types of position similar to one another, where the lines of play to assure equality are somewhat similar."

In other words it is folly to be wise. Perfection is a path which leads to stalemate. And I had planned to spend my declining years in doling out bright dimes from an invested wealth of knowledge! But now it seems that every well-considered step brings the wayfarer that much nearer to the rainbow's end where lies futility. Schopenhauer was right. And so is Dorothy Parker. This concept of wisdom as a withering ailment leads on directly to the ultimate in blasphemy. One pictures the Lord on high as looking down upon the loftiest of human aspirations and saying, "Oh, that old gambit," before he sends an angel to decline it. However, in all this there is food for fundamentalists. Once it seemed to me that there was petty tyranny in the law which made forbidden all fruit upon the Tree of Knowledge. Now I see more clearly the logic of the cosmic plan. Shakespeare wrote "Hamlet" because he was not the perfect playwright. "Is this pretty good stuff or am I crazy?" he said to himself as he set down "The rest is silence." Not being sure, he could feel the moving finger on his spine when audiences clapped hands together. Fortunately for him he was not Bobby Jones who knows where every mashie shot will fall immediately he hits it. I doubt if he—or Bernard Shaw either—has much fun. Possibly some subtle philosopher might find that Waterloo was the greatest moment of ecstasy in all the campaigns of Napoleon. When he saw the battle go against him he must have had a poignant realization that up to that time he had been pretty good.

There is nothing fantastic in the prediction of impotence among the masters through an excess of wisdom, as the final standing in the recent contest proves. Thirty-four times Capablanca and Alekhine joined issue and twenty-five times the score was 0-0. All Argentine stood agog as one or the other fought with his back against the goal posts but each rush of the aggressor was stopped without a gain. "Hold 'em, Alekhine!" Indeed, even the games which Capablanca lost depended upon some slip which could be traced to his advancing years. In the beginning of the match he won, but then he was a younger man. From the chess master's table one fetches nothing save at the rare moments when he crumbles. But we don't have to be masters. By dint of will we can avoid it. Even Capablanca can remember back to the time when chess was way up town. "We purposely abstained from investigations and publications," he explains, "because we feared it would shorten the life of the game." As things stand, he believes, "The game evidently needs to be modified for contests among great masters." After all these centuries man has caught up with chess and conquered it. The new rule which I advocate is that whenever the king comes into any kind of danger the player may remove the piece and put it in his vest pocket. This would introduce strategy beyond anything now known and victory could be obtained only by the man ablest to sneak up upon his adversary unawares.

However, out of the whole tragic business I have learned my lesson and herewith I make the firm resolve never to be too good at any art or pastime. Possibly Calvin Coolidge is acting on the same theory in quitting the Presidency now for whittling. And when I find it is dangerous for me to go on longer with the task of creating literature I can return to painting in comparative safety.

There is a story of a gallant chess player who suffered not at all from Capablanca's complex. The captain of a ship, he went through all the cabins to find a passenger who would accept his challenge. At last there came a small man who timidly accepted. The board was set, the crew and all stood round to watch the struggle. Deeply the captain burrowed into his chair and filled a huge pipe to sustain him. The little man thrust out a pawn two paces while the captain gazed at the move in horror. One deep puff he drew and then he swept the pieces to the floor, crying out "That beats me."

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Covering Washington

The Nation's *Bi-Weekly Washington Letter*

By THE UNOFFICIAL SPOKESMAN

Washington, D. C., December 5

IT is doubtful that the present session of Congress will be hymned in history for the legislation enacted or the statesmanship revealed. Nevertheless, it is full of rosy promise for the fat boys who acquire their Cadillacs by acquainting Congress with the will of the people. The unctuous gentlemen who do their work in hotel suites and around the House and Senate office buildings, and are known variously as legislative agents, lobbyists, and fixers, may well smile and lick their lips when they contemplate the calendar. There are huge power grants to be sought, inheritance taxes to be repealed, annoying investigations to be blocked. There are Vare and Smith to be shoved over, and other succulent objectives to be gained, if possible.

Two years ago it became the will of the people—that s, of the people who had just inherited large fortunes—that the estate tax should be retroactively reduced. Accordingly, the distinguished services of former Republican House Floor Leader Frank Mondell, of Wyoming, and former Senator Augustus Owsley Stanley, of Kentucky, were obtained. As ex-members, they had the free run of the House and Senate chambers, which was no disadvantage. In consequence of these and other labors, some $80,000,000 in taxes was handed back to that class of taxpayers which could, above all other classes, afford to pay them.

* * * * *

JUST when organized business seemed ready to complete the apotheosis of Coolidge and Mellon, a strange hush falls upon the Te Deums led by the United States Chamber of Commerce. It is a hush of bewilderment and chagrin, mingled with a feeling that Calvin and Andrew are betraying the simple faith reposed in them by the men who draw down the big dividends. They are more than shocked; they are scandalized.

The cause of the break between the chamber on the one hand and Messrs. Coolidge and Mellon on the other, is easily stated. Mr. Coolidge wants the tax reduction limited to about $225,000,000, so there will be no difficulty in balancing the budget even though the Congressional pork barrel should bulge fatter than usual on the eve of election. The great minds of the Chamber are determined upon a cut of $400,000,000, even at the risk of a deficit.

Among the perplexed and patriotic great minds, the suspicion is said to be gaining credence that the insidious influence of Bolshevist propaganda emanating from Moscow has succeeded at last in corrupting Coolidge and Mellon. It is a horrible thought, but how else can they explain this inexplicable refusal of Calvin to sign on the dotted line?

* * * * *

MR. COOLIDGE will win if he wants to and if the regular Republicans in Congress can be induced to stand firm against the beseeching and threatening of the bankers and merchants back home. Certainly the Progressives who hold the balance of power in the Senate will give no aid to the efforts of business, already overloaded with profits beyond all dreams of prosperity, to escape carrying its just share of the remainder of the $26,000,000,000 war debt that weighs down the shoulders of the American people.

In the end, of course, the joke will be on the Democrats, who apparently are quite willing to play the game of the United States Chamber of Commerce. And when it comes time to pass the hat for the 1928 campaign, the great majority of the chamber members will drop their contributions into the Republican derby with a couple of merry ha-ha's at the dull-witted Democratic leaders who thought to gain their support.

* * * * *

AMONG the lesser camp-followers who have arrived for the session are some familiar faces. There is, for example, the face of the celebrated Blair Coan, who was sent to Montana three years ago by the secretary of the Republican National Committee to "get" Senators Walsh and Wheeler in reprisal for their activity in investigating the official acts of Albert B. Fall and Harry M. Daugherty, and who actually did succeed in having Senator Wheeler indicted. Despite the exposure of this frame-up Coan is still at liberty and now blossoms out as a newspaper correspondent. Setting up quarters in the Wardman Park Hotel, he has circularized newspaper editors as follows:

"The real news of what is happening, as you know, seldom is told in news dispatches, but it is WHAT IS BACK OF THE NEWS that is interesting." This lascivious and inviting background he offers to supply in "daily, weekly, or semi-weekly" news letters at the astonishing rate of one dollar a week. This bargain offer has given rise to some speculation. It has been argued by real newspaper correspondents that no man could make a living on such a schedule, and hence that the ineffable Coan must have other sources of revenue in view, perhaps in connection with his news service. Perhaps that is why rumor connected him with the Vare camp. Squeamish the Vare gang is not, but apparently it has some sense of dignity left, because prompt and emphatic denials were issued that Coan had been, or would be, retained to further "Boss" Vare's cause in the Senate. Similar reports have connected him with the power trust, but thus far evidence is lacking.

It will be interesting to scan the Coan news letters to see what causes are supported and what measures advocated. The first letter has already been published and contains such gems of wisdom as the following: "For four years Russia has had complete control of Mexico. There are those who will go as far as to say that the laws confiscating property were drafted at Moscow, but be this as it may surely everyone knows that the law prohibiting religious worship is copied from the Soviet code." Or this: "Madam Kollontai, arch sorceress of the sordid social order which holds Russia in the palm of its dirty hands, was the ambassador from the Soviet Republic to Mexico. . . . She it was who persuaded President Calles of Mexico to squander all the finances in the Mexican treasury. . . ."

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PURGED of his sins by breakfasting at the White House with the President, Bill Lorimer, once the Blond Boss of Illinois, is planning now to return to the Senate seat from which he was expelled in 1912. The evidence presented on that historic occasion showed that his election had been purchased by the bribery of members of the Illinois Legislature with a juicy jackpot raised by certain big corporations which expected to profit by it. The Senate put the boot to Mr. Lorimer by a vote of more than two to one, and for a decade he stood as the personification of all that was putrid and corrupt in politics.

Times have changed, and we are now in the era of the New Morality ushered in with the inauguration of Warren Harding, Calvin Coolidge, and the Ohio Gang. The other day Lorimer came back to the capital as a cheer leader in Big Bill Thompson's noisy flood-control ballyhoo. The hospitable White House, always ready to welcome distinguished party men from the Middle West, lost no time in extending Lorimer an invitation to have sausage and buckwheats with the President. Lorimer went, and with him went Big Bill and Illinois's Governor, Len Small, who recently paid back half a million which he had unlawfully taken from the State Treasury. What a quartet that must have been around the breakfast table—Blond Bill, Big Bill, Len Small, and Calvin!

Thus anointed and sweetened with Vermont maple syrup, Lorimer went back to Chicago full of determination to come back to the Senate. Perhaps he will be available for the seat which will be made vacant by the Senate's refusal to seat Frank Smith. And why not? Lorimer bought only a legislature; Smith and Insull corrupted the electorate of the whole State. Under the circumstances, Blond Bill could easily qualify as the reform candidate.

Executions: The New Sport

By EDWARD STEVENSON

THE other night New Jersey executed four men. Four! Even Massachusetts's pride must be wounded when it reads of Jersey's astonishing program. These men died for the murder of one man—not four—last July. They were Italians, so it may be supposed they felt no pain. As one complacent white-collar man remarked: "They ought to send all the wops to hell. They'll keep Sacco and Vanzetti company."

Theoretically these men died to expiate a horrible crime: actually they died to provide amusement for a gang of excitement seekers who now attend executions with all the gusto of undergraduates at a major football game. In fact, executions have become games. Invitations are given to those who desire them; and if we may believe the stories there are many who desire them. Executions are attended by the same class of persons who attend a burlesque show supposed to be particularly obscene. They are blood cousins to those who crowd courtrooms during sensational divorce cases; they are related—and not distantly—to those who toss ticker tape and scrap-paper upon the heads of visiting celebrities. Those who cannot attend the executions witness them vicariously through the pages of the tabloid press. The New York *Daily News* gave a headline of an inch and three-eights to the execution of four men. To effect a reform? To cause a wave of revulsion against legalized murder? One has only to read the inside of the paper to discover its purpose, the purpose of a newspaper which believes justice is not done unless there is an execution as an epilogue to a murder. "What Has Happened to Justice?" it cries each Sunday, citing cases in which murdered persons have gone unavenged. Sometimes it changes its cry to "When Justice Triumphed," licking its chops as it relates the expiation of murder by murder.

Yet in this Jersey affair the *News* has performed a public service which even the uncynical might believe unintentional. It has shown legalized murder in all its barbaric rottenness. For that we can thank it.

Mr. Lowell Limpus, "member of the *News* staff who witnesses executions," makes the usual shocked reference to "the morbid curiosity of the witnesses." Then he takes a deep breath and plunges into morbidness. Mr. Limpus says: "Every one of the quartet swore he was innocent, from Big Joe, who greeted the packed-in audience with 'Gentlemen, I am going to my death as innocent as God Almighty' to Capozzi, whose last words to the public were: 'I die with a smile—and I am an innocent man.'"

Mr. Limpus continues:

> The death-chamber was jammed like a rush-hour subway train. . . . A crowd of 150 invited witnesses had shoved and almost fought to enter the small room, until it was split in half, and some seventy-five forced to wait outside in the prison yard. They grumbled as they were informed they must miss half the "show." It [the crowd] shoved forward against the ropes that held it away from the squat unpainted chair.

After proclaiming his innocence and declaring he was framed, Big Joe was executed. Mr. Limpus says:

> The gray-haired executioner, Robert Elliott, who performed a similar service for Sacco and Vanzetti, spun the wheel on the control board, just behind the chair. It was in plain sight of the spectators. There came a sizzling sound.
>
> The curious pressed forward again, commenting audibly. . . . Men cursed each other because they could not see the clay in the chair . . . [Details] . . . Big Joe was carried out and the crowd argued and struggled for better positions.

The next man died pleading his innocence, accusing the Newark detective chief, Brex, of framing him. After the two were executed there was an intermission while the old audience was put out and the new audience admitted. Mr. Limpus goes on:

> The curious resisted desperately. They hadn't seen all the show yet. . . . Men fairly ran to be near the grisly chair. They joked and greeted friends. The odor of whiskey floated in the air, to mingle with the scent of scorched flesh.

Lynchings are terrible enough; but they are usually more or less surreptitious; they are carried out in anger and prejudice. The lynchers usually have a personal interest in the lynching; they may even think that by doing away with a Negro who has run amuck they are making the world that much safer for virgins. The witnesses at legal executions have no such motives or excuses. Their attendance is motivated solely by a desire to be in at the kill, to watch poor wretches writhe in their death agony, to experience a new emotion.

We shudder at the brutality of the Spanish bull-fights; we make spectacles of the slaying of human beings. We weep when we think of cannibals: cannibals kill humans for food; we do it for amusement.

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The Bosch Magneto Case Comes to Court

By PERCY MUSGRAVE

AT last the famous Bosch Magneto Company case has arrived in a courtroom. Before Arthur Black, the son of ex-Governor Black of New York, as referee, the suit brought by the Government against the Bosch company for more than five million dollars is being heard in Boston. For five and a half years it has lain dormant, although some nationally important figures are involved and although, aside from the large sum at stake, the inquiry may at last lead to an official uncovering of some of the methods of two Alien Property Custodians in handling German property. Nearly twenty defendants will appear before Mr. Black, among them being A. Mitchell Palmer, the former Alien Property Custodian and later Attorney General of the United States; Francis P. Garvan of Chemical Foundation fame, successor of Palmer as Alien Property Custodian; Martin E. Kern of Allentown, Pennsylvania, and other places, ıe purchaser of the Bosch Magneto property; his friend, Arthur T. Murray, now president of the new American Bosch Magneto Corporation; Hornblower and Weeks and the Chase Securities Corporation, both of which acted as underwriters to a syndicate which purchased the assets of the old Bosch Magneto Company; Joseph F. Guffey, an important Democratic politician in Pennsylvania, a warm friend of Palmer, and former director of the Bureau of Sales of the Alien Property Custodian, who was indicted in the Southern District of New York for embezzlement of more than $400,000 (his case has not yet been brought to trial), and various other persons. A bill of complaint alleging a conspiracy to defraud the Government of the amount named was filed in Boston in September, 1926. The bill had been drafted and presented to Attorney General Sargent for approval and signature some time in the early part of August of that year, but the Attorney General delayed having it filed until a few days before the time limit had expired. As a result of this interesting negligence a United States judge in Boston ruled that several of the defendants had not been served within the time set by the statute of limitations.

The Nation's readers will recall that the Bosch Magneto Company was sold to Martin E. Kern, whose past history is extremely varied and interesting, through his agent and associate, H. D. Griffiths of New York. A. Mitchell Palmer's friendship with Kern began when the former was counsel of the Bethlehem Motors Corporation—he has also been indicted for having sworn falsely that he was a citizen, in order to obtain a passport—of which Kern and Arthur T. Murray were officials. Kern claims that he induced Palmer to seize the Bosch Magneto Company as enemy-alien-owned and to put Murray in as manager of the company for the Government. It is charged that the directors' fees were at once raised from $20 to $100 a meeting in addition to their expenses, that there was a great writing down of assets, and a similarly great increase in expenses. The sale of the property was first scheduled for November 27, 1918, but it had to be put off until December 7 because of a sudden doubt as to whether the more than one hundred patents belonging to the company had been legally seized by Palmer. This was finally remedied by an executive order issued by President Wilson permitting the Alien Property Custodian to seize the patents as the property of Robert Bosch, an enemy alien under the terms of the Trading with the Enemy Act. There were only two bidders at the sale, one being Harry Fisk, acting for the John Willys interests, who bid up to $4,100,000. To Howard D. Griffiths as agent for Kern the property was knocked down on a bid of $4,150,000. The Government claims that the real worth of the company was $9,685,564.07.

But Kern and Murray did not wait for this actual sale to lay their plans. With George A. MacDonald, a Springfield, Massachusetts, banker and later a director of the new company, they made an arrangement with Hornblower and Weeks under which this firm (of which John W. Weeks, the late Secretary of War, was originally a member) agreed, in case Kern got the company, to underwrite a new concern, the American Bosch Magneto Corporation, with a capital stock of 60,000 shares of a nominal value, and 7 per cent serial gold notes to the value of $1,800,000. Of the capital stock 45,000 shares was to be sold to the syndicate at $60 per share and in turn offered to the public at $65. The notes were to be sold to the syndicate at 98 and offered to the public at 100. Both the notes and capital stock were oversubscribed. The remaining 15,000 shares were to be distributed as a bonus in the following proportions:

Hornblower and Weeks	3,500	shares
Chase Securities Corporation	3,500	"
Martin E. Kern	2,667	"
Arthur T. Murray	2,667	"
George A. MacDonald	2,666	"
	15,000	"

To MacDonald were originally allotted 3,100 shares, for which he paid $5 per share. Why this was done is not clear, but in the final distribution the number of shares was substantially in the ratio shown above. Kern placed his shares in the name of his mother, Mary Kern, while Murray had his issued in the name of his father, Thomas S. Murray. A million dollars was thus made by the insiders through this bonus stock, without anyone's putting up a cent. It is certain that Kern and Murray did not sell their bonus stock at $65 per share. A short while afterward the stock jumped to 130 and then these men are alleged to have "cleaned up."

The next figure of importance upon the stage of this extraordinary play is J. Harry Covington, who resigned as a Supreme Court judge of the District of Columbia shortly before the sale of the Bosch Magneto Company. Also a warm friend of Palmer's, he received a fee of $1,000 for legal work in connection with the Bosch company for the vendor, namely the Government, and also acted as counsel for Kern, in the purchase of the company, for which Kern gave him a fee of $25,000. The legal fees paid by the Government in this case were more than $80,000. This neat sum was for Americanizing the concern, but in addition large salaries were paid to the temporary government officers of the company.

Next there appears on the boards Joseph F. Guffey, Democratic National Committeeman from Pennsylvania,

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quite as eager as Mitchell Palmer and Woodrow Wilson to save the world for democracy. His plum, as Director of Sales, was handling more than $150,000,000, the proceeds of sales of enemy-owned property. Instead of treating these funds in a fiduciary capacity, he mixed them up in one bank after another in which they earned interest running from 2¼ per cent to 3 per cent, aggregating in all $406,000. By a curious lapse of memory, when he remitted the principal of these funds to the Alien Property Custodian he seems to have neglected to send the accrued interest. For this lapse a United States grand jury, as already stated, had the unkindness to indict him for embezzlement. In the Harding Administration when Colonel Thomas Miller, who has himself been convicted of conspiracy as Alien Property Custodian, was in that office Guffey was forced to pay over this interest to the Treasury. Being bankrupt at the time, he is said to have borrowed the money from friends. Curiously enough, Mr. Guffey has never been brought to trial, and there are attempts being made even now to have the indictment dismissed. It is a great pity that the case is not pressed as it might throw some light on the loaning to him or to his private companies of several millions of dollars by the very banks in which he deposited the receipts from alien property sales.

If it is gratifying that the case against the manipulators of the Bosch Magneto Company is at last under way, it is time that the Government woke up to the necessity of pushing the Guffey case as well. The blackest page in the war scandals remains the Alien Property Custodian office. The statute of limitations has unfortunately intervened in some cases, and the hesitancy of the Harding Administration to go after Wilson officials has protected others—both Republicans and Democrats had their hands in Uncle Sam's pocket during this period. Hence this Boston case is of importance second only to the oil scandals.

Anxiety in Solitude

By HELENE MULLINS

This evening I await an elegant young gentleman
Who has known me a number of years, and sometimes reads
my verse.
He has avowed to me, not once, but again and again,
That he thinks me an honest poet, and is sure there are
many worse.

I have this day finished a lyric he has not seen before.
I am, with it, like a queen with a gem that has cost a fabulous sum,
Yet sitting here and awaiting his knock upon the door,
I am ill at ease, I twist my hands, I pray he forget to come.

I begin to fear the evening will be rather droll;
Somewhat between regret and a furtive dismay,
He will carefully keep his emotions under control,
While squeezing me into a niche where he hopes I will stay.

He will long to regard me with tenderness. Yet think!
What can he feel for me, excepting compassion,
Whose poetry is charming, but whose fingers are stained
with ink,
And whose gown is not very bright and not of the latest
fashion?

The King Is Dead

By MARGARET MARSHALL

I ENTERED the Empire Room at the Waldorf-Astoria to attend the private showing of the new Ford. Near the center of the room a group of people circled, looking down at something—like mourners viewing a corpse. Somewhere an orchestra was playing bad, sad music. Or perhaps it was the velvet hangings and the cut-glass chandeliers and the noiseless young men in tuxedos and stiff white fronts who hovered about and murmured softly in one's ear: "It has a miniature Lincoln transmission"; "They're going to make 12,000 a day"; "100,000 orders already from Greater New York"; "No parts of the old Ford are interchangeable with the new."

Then I noticed that the spectators were all dressed up in fur-trimmed evening wraps and raccoon coats and high-heeled pumps—so I knew it wasn't a funeral. The circling crowd was looking down at the new chassis from Detroit, so I looked too. I passed on to the new sedan, and the new coupe, and the new sport model, all arrayed in the refin new colors—gun metal, blue, dawn gray, Niagara blue, Arabian sand. Standard gear-shift, four-wheel brakes, foot throttle, gasoline gauge on the dash, speedometer—only a vestige of the old crank that required profane strength to spin—merely a hole, covered by a round shiny plate.

"Now we'll see how I look in a Ford," said a stringy dowager in evening dress.

At one end of the room the anatomy of Model A was laid out on a blue velvet tripod trimmed with gold braid. It was all very refined and quiet and a bit plushy.

* * *

Model T was one of the unpleasant facts of life. The family bought and confronted me with it one spring when I came home from school to spend the summer on the ranch. My brother, in overalls, backed it out of the shed and paraded in it up and down in front of the ranch-house. For a background there were the log barns and a wheat-field and then gray sagebrush in the distance, sweltering dry in the sun. The sound of hens cackling and a dog's bark and that funny Ford horn are bound together in my memory.

I hated Model T. I said I wouldn't ride in the ugly thing, sitting high and tinny on its four wheels. But I was young then. Soon I found—like several million others—that it "would go anywhere." It would, and did. It chased antelopes in African deserts—and farmers herded cows with it. Ditches, ruts, mountain roads, mudholes, high centers did not matter. "It took you anywhere and brought you back." And for a while that was enough for most people—so most people bought a Ford. Then they wanted to be "smart." They were not so much interested in going anywhere as they were in being seen going somewhere. Model T was sturdy, strong, brave. But it certainly was not smart.

Mr. Ford was wise. He knew Model T was done for. He had a problem, but it was rather simple. He merely made a car to order—price and all—to suit the predominant desires of present-day America.

Model A is here, irrevocably. "No parts of the new Ford are interchangeable with the old."

Of course not.

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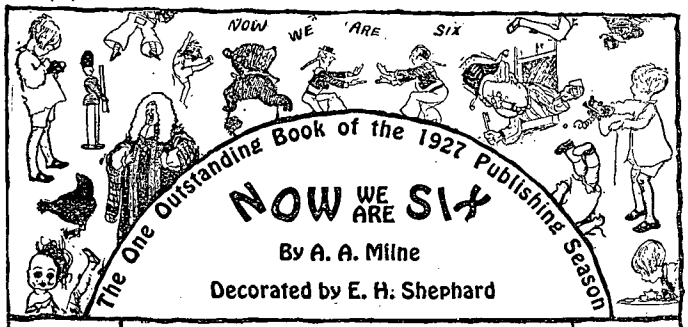

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Is Germany Extravagant?

By FREDERICK KUH

Berlin, November 25

WHEN an American correspondent picked up a Communist daily in Berlin last October, saw a vague reference to a new, critical memorandum which Parker Gilbert, the Reparations Agent, was addressing to the German Government, and tersely cabled this item to the New York *Times*, he was blissfully innocent of revealing a secret which was to open a new chapter in German history. The *Times* editor at home, who buried this news dispatch on Page 8, was no less guileless. It remained for the German press to realize, also tardily, that something important had happened and that it behooved them to find out what.

Actually, the German Government and people were being confronted with an ultimatum, giving them the choice between keeping their standard of living down, existing within their modest means, and enjoying a fair chance of lightening the heavy hand of foreign creditors or else borrowing and spending indiscriminately at the risk of perpetuating their subserviency.

For a long time Mr. Gilbert had been hinting, then flatly asserting to Dr. Heinrich Koehler, the German Minister of Finance, that German financial policy was unsound. His first objections, imparted to the Berlin Government in September, 1926, and directed against the loans which the several states of Germany were obtaining abroad, were not divulged to the public. In fact, as far as paying any attention to Mr. Gilbert's words goes, the Government might have been as little aware of them as the public.

This spring the Reparations Agent protested at the Government's postponement of the measures which were to put in order the confused relations between the Reich and its component states. This protest, too, fell on the deaf ear of German officialdom. Secret economic diplomacy proving unavailing, Mr. Gilbert used the report he published on June 10 as a trumpet to sound a public warning against the prodigious foreign borrowing and spendthrift policy of the German states. Although the tone of this report would have jarred an ordinary minister out of his cabinet seat, Finance Minister Koehler received it with bored but well-bred silence. For months Mr. Gilbert continued his soliloquies in the presence of the German Government, and nothing was done. Suddenly the Prussian state loan, now ready to be thrown on the American market, was blocked. If the German Government had not heeded Mr. Gilbert's criticism, the American bankers had. Then Dr. Heinrich Koehler, Minister of Finance, stopped, looked, and listened. Since Dr. Koehler's concern, even then, threatened to subside, Mr. Gilbert suggested that he might keep it alive by presenting a written note, embodying his criticisms. The upshot was the delivery of the Gilbert memorandum, courteously humiliating, and the German reply, conceding the justice of some or Mr. Gilbert's arguments, refuting a couple of them, and evading most of them.

All the points at issue, numerous and often technical, cannot be chronicled and examined here. But the cardinal points are clear:

First, Mr. Gilbert points to the increase of expenditures in the German budget, amounting to 7,444 million marks in 1925, 8,543 million in 1926, and 9,130 million in 1927—a rise of nearly 1,700 million in two years, of which only 607 million went for reparations payments. The German Government argues that more than half the budget outlays were devoted to paying off war debts at home and abroad. This is true. But it would be difficult to name the government of a single nation, which was engaged in the war, in whose budget the payment of internal and foreign debts does not play a predominant role.

Second, the Reparations Agent deplores the financial arrangements, or lack of them, between the federal administration and state governments. Fixing of the responsibility between them for tax-collecting and public expenditures, he says, is becoming continually less clear. Dr. Koehler, without attempting to refute Mr. Gilbert's criticism, answers that a clear-cut, lasting settlement of financial functions between the Reich and the federal states is impossible as long as the German agricultural situation remains poor (despite a 20 per cent increase in this year's harvest over 1926, the value of the crops is said to be 20 to 30 per cent below the pre-war level), and while German industry is not thoroughly adapted to post-war production and marketing conditions. The German reply also suggests that undue interference by the federal Government in the finances of the states would be unconstitutional. This is an admission that the particularist interests of the states are allowed to conflict with the interests of the country as a whole.

Third, the Gilbert note points out that the Government's salaries-reform bill for the civil service was stated last July to entail approximately 10 per cent increases, while it is now officially announced that the increases will range from 18 to 25 per cent. However necessary and desirable these "raises" for state employees may be, the Government parties are aware that the next German general elections are but a few months distant and that several hundred thousand civil-service workers might be persuaded to vote for those parties which raise their salaries. Mr. Gilbert estimates the cost of these salary increases at 1,200 to 1,500 million marks, while the Government, in its response, places the amount at about 1,250 millions. Despite Dr. Koehler's assurances to the contrary, Mr. Gilbert insists that the money for the increased salaries can be derived only from higher taxes.

Finally, Mr. Gilbert takes exception to new expenditures for the proposed educational-reform law (which envisages a reorganization of the school system on the basis of religious instruction) and to the plan to compensate German citizens for losses and damages suffered through the war. Mr. Gilbert again emphasizes that he will not approve the marketing of the preferred shares of the German state railways to obtain revenues for these or any other outlays. Dr. Koehler replies that the financing of the school reform will not be felt for several years; but Mr. Gilbert evidently believes that coming years cannot be ignored, even by a Finance Minister.

Now it is odd that the Reparations Agent, the brunt of whose attack is leveled against the German budget, should insist that he cannot interfere with that budget. When I

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talked to Mr. Gilbert a few days after the publication of his memorandum, he desired me to understand that he exercises no veto over the German budget or its separate items. "I do not enjoy the prerogatives granted to the foreign finance controllers of Austria and Hungary, who could block budgetary expenditures if they deemed it necessary," he said.

Mr. Gilbert is a modest man. If it is literally true that he possesses no legal right to dictate the German budget, it is significant that he did not remind me, as he had reminded the German Government and people, that he wields a far greater power in his ability to influence the sources of credit for Germany. Germany has many potent creditors and Mr. Gilbert is their agent. Neither bankers nor their agents are accustomed to let legal etiquette dictate their behavior toward a debtor. The world's bankers and especially Wall Street, where Germany has borrowed hundreds of millions of dollars in the last three years, are quick to react to a word from the Reparations Agent. Mr. Gilbert requires no formal veto power over the German budget as long as he wields an informal veto over foreign credits for Germany.

Moreover, it is reasonable to suppose that Mr. Gilbert would not insist on vital changes in German financial policy unless he were confident that he could enforce his demands.

Even the German Government admitted the justification of many of his criticisms. Mr. Gilbert denounced the loans floated abroad by German states and municipalities as "unproductive." He is treading firm ground here. The president of the Reichsbank, Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, has declared that the cost of swimming pools, parks, athletic stadiums, and theaters, erected by German cities in recent years, almost equals the total amount of money which the German cities borrowed abroad. It is fair to say that these loans have been diverted from channels more vital to a country engaged in rebuilding a war-shattered economic system and paying off 6,700 million marks of internal and foreign debts contracted since the war, besides reparations. Germany answers that many of these municipal and state loans went to construct electrical, gas, and water plants, port facilities, and agricultural improvements. Many Germans wondered whether the Reparations Agent had assumed that because such public utilities are privately owned in America the money invested in them became "unproductive" in Germany, where the utilities are municipally owned.

The German Government, while promising a new regime of economy in general terms, failed to describe how and when these economies are to be enforced. Mr. Gilbert's curiosity is left unsatisfied as to how the Government will obtain the vast sums needed to reimburse German claimants for their war-time losses. Nor is the source of credits revealed, from which Germany's extraordinary budget shall be covered. Whence is the money coming to meet increased reparations payments, 1,250 million marks of salary increases annually, the costs of carrying out the school reform? Although Mr. Gilbert suggested that these sums might be obtained by a far-reaching administrative reform, cutting down the expenses of federal, state, and communal government and reducing the subsidies which the Reich grants to the states and cities, there are no signs that this wholesale slashing of the cost of government is to be attempted.

"Germany will scarcely be able effectively to protest against the unfair pressure of reparations payments," wrote the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, "while critics at home and abroad can point to the waste of huge sums in government administration."

Germany's reply to the Gilbert memorandum was a disappointment. Its logic is occasionally amusing. Referring to the improvement of German economic conditions, the German document says, "The amount of goods produced grew more rapidly than prices rose." This reminded the German economist, Gustav Stolper, of the familiar riddle: "A ship is 117 meters long. How old is the captain?"

There is nothing in the German declaration which will embarrass Mr. Gilbert in reviving his entire criticism in the annual report which he will issue early in December. The German reply included the summary of an irrelevant speech delivered by the Finance Minister before the Reichstag budget committee. The German analysis of the Reich's budget, which experts regarded as less competent than the analysis Mr. Gilbert had made in his June report, contained no reference to the increase of 250 million marks for German military expenditures within three years. On the other hand, one critic pointed out that Mr. Gilbert made no mention of the several hundred million dollars' worth of German pre-war property, still held in sequestration by the United States. In connection with Mr. Gilbert's objection to indiscriminate German borrowing abroad, it was suggested that some of this borrowing would have been unnecessary if the sequestered property had been released.

One cannot suppress a suspicion that the underlying motive of the Gilbert memorandum is not to be found in his detailed, technical criticism, and that, in a candid, unguarded moment he might have said:

"The Dawes Plan will enter into full swing after September 30, 1928, when the 'normal' 2,500 million marks annuities will be exacted from Germany for the first time. There is reason to doubt whether the transfer of immense sums of currency from Germany to her former enemies will be accomplished without endangering the stability of German currency. Germany is bound to do her utmost to facilitate the transfer of reparations. But German financial policy is unsound and, when difficulties in the execution of the Dawes Plan arise, I may be constrained to place the responsibility upon Germany and to recall the warnings which I issued as long ago as 1926 and 1927."

In the Driftway

BEFORE the season for summer reminiscences closes the Drifter wants to tell what a nice city is Portland, Maine. Most vacationists use it merely as a lodging house for the night while whizzing through by automobile or as a place to change trains in. The Drifter arrived there last summer with some such program in his own mind, but liked the town so well that what was to have been a visit of hours stretched into days. What he liked best was the friendly and interested way in which he was treated by everyone from whom he sought information. It is a positive pleasure to be a stranger in Portland asking the way about. Everyone seems pleased and able to give you directions, and—oddly enough—they generally turn out to be right. There is no officious boosterism in evidence.

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AT the official information bureau the Drifter came upon the folder of a camp which he must surely visit some day. "We have no bathrooms, tennis courts, or golf course," read the announcement. "The camp cannot be reached by automobiles or motor boats."

* * * * *

PORTLAND has some sedate and beautiful old houses, some ancient and sky-scraping elms in its streets, and a delightful lack of conventional "sights." Chief among the latter is the old Longfellow home. As a rule the Drifter does not visit such places—they bore him. But the Longfellow house proved a pleasant exception. It has been made as little of a museum and kept as much of a home as possible. The furniture is disposed about the rooms much as it must have been, and the visitor can wander about at will. It is true that an attendant tracked after the Drifter, pretty close at his heels, but there was doubtless something about his looks which suggested he might walk off with a four-poster bed or a wood-burning stove. He felt suspicious of himself. Anyhow he enjoyed the visit and he came away with an enhanced respect for him who in Portland is spoken of simply as "The Poet." There is an atmosphere in the home of the finest and fullest old New England gentility—and, say what you will, this was something pretty fine.

* * * * *

MEMORANDA on the walls of orders for groceries indicate that they lived well in the Longfellow household and were not such teetotalers as some people nowadays might like to believe. There seem to have been more bottles of brandy ordered than could possibly have been used for strictly medicinal purposes. And speaking of medicine there wasn't much money in it in those days. A faded bill recovered from Longfellow's parents shows that Dr. Shirley Erving in 1807 received $5 for assisting the stork to bring young Henry into the world. No wonder they had large families in those days.

* * * * *

WHEN the Drifter was in Portland there were only two daily newspapers issued, one in the morning, the other in the evening—and both under the same ownership. In the last few weeks a new daily has made its appearance, the Portland *Evening News*, under the editorship of the Drifter's old friend and former fellow-worker on *The Nation*, Ernest Gruening. Portland is on the way to becoming a finer city than ever. THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Symphony in the South

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: A mob-proof jail and park streets were until recently all that Macon, Georgia, could flaunt; it could hardly brag (though it did) of the accident of Sidney Lanier being born here and eventually finding himself at Baltimore. But when a group of its provincial inhabitants perform Beethoven's symphonies of a Sunday afternoon to a crowd of three thousand, the event deserves notice. What was it Mencken said in his better days—"As scarce as an oboe-player in the South"?

Macon has an eighty-piece symphony orchestra. To be sure, there is a clamorous need for a harpist, a bassoon player, and an exponent of the Cor anglais, but these things will come. Yet—how long can a local symphony orchestra last if set down among the cotton-fields and peach orchards of Georgia?

Macon is perhaps not typical. The presence of a liberal newspaper, which is bombarding the local buyers and money-lenders with propaganda on the trade-getting magic of a weekly free concert, is something which the average Southern city would lack. Last summer the Birdsey Flour Mills responded with a sum large enough to support the ensemble through the hotter part of the year. Now, however, both the weather and the ears of local merchants are apparently turning cold. To meet this exhaustion of revenue the orchestra sponsored a benefit performance of "H. M. S. Pinafore," succeeding, by a hurricane of publicity, in getting fairly good audiences, but the net results will pay for only one-and-a-half concerts; and the presentation of half a concert would be an awkward affair.

What *can* a small Southern—or Northern—city do with a resident symphony orchestra?

Macon, Georgia, November 23 GEO. A. PINDAR

What Is a Bar Association?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In January I was the flattered recipient of a letter from a State director of the American Bar Association's membership committee. It began: "It is a pleasure to join most heartily in the inclosed invitation presented to you by the president of the American Bar Association." The director could not know how compelling his mere invitation was, so he proceeded to reason why. "Membership in the association," he continued, "is really indispensable to every lawyer who has at heart the maintenance of the ancient standards of honor and dignity of the profession and the promotion of the administration of justice." The State director in closing his gracious letter expressed the hope that I could find it agreeable to sign at once the inclosed card of application and give him "the satisfaction and pleasure of proposing you for membership." This hope found echo in the accompanying invitation from the president, Charles S. Whitman, who said in part: "I extend to you a most cordial invitation to join this large group of your brothers at the bar, and to give us the advantage of your experience and ability, working with us to maintain the high traditions of our profession."

Needless to say, I applied. But why have I not been advised of the disposition of my application? My correspondent must have proposed me, as he attached no condition to his promise to do so except that I return the card of application. The membership committee, composed in part of Moorfield Storey, Frank B. Kellogg, Elihu Root, Hampton L. Carson, John W. Davis, and Charles E. Hughes, would certainly not deny me the *indispensable* privilege of membership.

During the months that I have waited I have wondered wherein have I failed to measure up. Graduation from the law school of the University of Pennsylvania and practice as an attorney for four years in West Virginia under a license from the Supreme Court of that State would probably entitle one to be considered a lawyer. My conduct as a practicing attorney has never, to my knowlege, been questioned. There has—but wait! At the foot of the application-card was this question—"Are you white, Indian, Mongolian, or Negro?"

But what has my being a Negro got to do with it?

Welch, West Virginia, November 14 LEON P. MILLER

Pound for President?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: "Norris for President" or anyone else? The American intelligentsia have as yet no effect on running the country, but that is no reason against a man's saying what he wants. In forty years' time no one will accept Mr. R. S. Baker's blah about Wilson. The one-and-one-half cent postage stamp will not be adorned by the effigy now printed upon it; starched

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fronts that inquire not whether justice is done, but whether formalities are complied with, will not be honored, even in public schools.

For next President I want no man who is not lucidly and clearly and with no trace or shadow of ambiguity against the following abuses: (1) Bureaucratic encroachment on the individual, as the asinine Eighteenth Amendment, passport and visa stupidities, arbitrary injustice from customs officials; (2) Article 211 of the Penal Code, and all such muddle-headedness in any laws whatsoever; (3) the thieving copyright law.

No man who has not sense enough to understand that these things are unnecessary evils, is fit to sit in the White House, however low the prestige of that dwelling may have been driven by recent incumbents. And no man who has not guts enough to take effective action against these evils is fit for that job or any other job in the government.

Rapallo, Italy, November 15 EZRA POUND

Why Harlan Dismissed Walt Whitman

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The recent republication of "The Good Gray Poet," W. D. O'Connor's vindictive assault upon James Harlan, because of his removal of Walt Whitman from a clerkship in the Interior Department, calls for at least a brief restatement of the facts in the case.

Senator Harlan was President Lincoln's last appointee to a seat in his Cabinet. When President Johnson urged Harlan to accept the Secretaryship of the Interior, the Senator reluctantly consented with a clear understanding that all supernumeraries were to be dropped from the departmental pay roll.

In my "Life of James Harlan," published by the Iowa State Historical Society in 1913, I briefly state the facts in the case. I quote:

> Among the many clerks and supernumeraries who received their dismissal from the Interior Department during the general clearing-out process instituted by Secretary Harlan was the famous poet, Walt Whitman, and probably no other similar dismissal brought down upon Harlan such a storm of censure. Whitman had earned the gratitude of the government by his devoted services to sick and wounded soldiers in the Washington hospitals, and had been given a clerkship in the Indian Bureau in recognition of those services. He "had been a favorite with the chief clerk in the bureau, and had been given a good deal of latitude," and "whenever the duties were not pressing, he was at work upon his manuscripts." That his work was not commensurate with his salary or with the services of those who were carrying the actual burden of clerical labor in the Indian Bureau is admitted by most of his biographers.
>
> As has been noted, Secretary Harlan early determined on a policy of economy, including the dismissal of every clerk not deemed necessary to the efficiency of the department. The rule was rigidly enforced and as many as eighty removals on a single day were reported. On June 30 occurred the dismissal of Walt Whitman, along with several others who had been holding their offices simply as rewards for past services.
>
> A number of Whitman's friends, chief among whom was W. D. O'Connor, a brilliant writer, resented the poet's dismissal and took up cudgels in his behalf. O'Connor charged Harlan with having gone to Whitman's desk at night and taken therefrom the manuscript of "Leaves of Grass," on which the poet was working at the time. Furthermore, O'Connor alleged that Harlan had read sufficiently far in the manuscript to convince himself that it did not meet his idea of decency, that he had then returned the manuscript to the desk, and immediately thereafter dismissed Whitman from the service.
>
> Secretary Harlan removed Whitman on Commissioner Dole's report recommending that he, with others, be dismissed, and for a reason virtually conceded by the more candid friends of the poet to be a valid one, namely, that his services were not essential to the successful operation of the Indian Bureau. The fact that an indiscreet friend unduly pressed Whitman's claims for reinstatement chiefly on the ground of his service in the hospitals and his literary achievements, and that Secretary Harlan saw no reason why the author of "Leaves of Grass" should be longer pensioned in a department devoted solely to business, is the only discoverable foundation for the O'Connor charges.

JOHNSON BRIGHAM

State Library, Des Moines, Iowa, November 10

To Teachers

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: This is an appeal to all teachers who are *Nation* readers and not members of the Teachers' Union.

It is true that teachers have grown suspicious and tired of the so-called betterment organizations and their out-of-town conventions. But the union has already proved itself a real service to us. Whether the issue relate to salaries, pensions, professional rights, or educational ideals, the union comes actively to the fore. Unionism is an inevitable development in any democratically run institution.

For an accurate summary of the union's history and work, write to the Teachers' Union, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

New York, November 27 MARION Z. POPPER

Who Are the Poor?

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: It has been brought to my attention that under date of June 29, 1927, you published an editorial giving certain statistics concerning this society. There was an error in these figures that I should like to correct. Of the 3,891 families under our care last year the largest single nationality group consisted of 1,133 native-born white families, or 29 per cent of the whole group. This means that the foreign-born still make up the majority of the families that came to our attention. It is true that of the foreign-born only 5 per cent had been here less than five years (showing it to be a fallacy that the very *recent* immigrant is our chief problem) but the foreign-born as a group have always been our chief concern—and still are.

New York, November 25 HELEN I. FISK,
Statistician, New York Charity Organization Society

Contributors to This Issue

Under the title Covering Washington *The Nation* will print a biweekly Washington letter.

PERCY MUSGRAVE is the pseudonym of a New York journalist.

MARGARET MARSHALL is on the staff of the *New Masses*.

FREDERICK KUH is Berlin correspondent of the United Press.

LYNN RIGGS, poet and playwright, is author of "The Big Lake" and other plays.

JAMES RORTY, author of "Children of the Sun," lived for some years in California.

ERNESTINE EVANS is a frequent contributor to magazines.

MICHAEL FRAENKEL, a New York business man who has quit business for literature, is planning a book on Gauguin.

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Books and Plays

Before Winter

By LYNN RIGGS

Winter again is sealing with a seal
His white imperious edict. It will behoove
Men, who are careless of their minds that move
Through rain and sun, to garner as they feel.
Flower and maple may not end their song
At its bright crest, nor any risen thing
Escape the woe of stream and blackbird's wing
Alike congealed and held as by a thong.

You too, who most of all that summers quicken
Sprawled in the sun, obey the grim design
Imposed on brow and lip. Now, lest I sicken
For its remembered beauty, I make haste
To cheat the winter and the general waste
And set, like this, upon your mouth a sign.

First Glance

"SCHOLAR, poet, historian, archaeologist, art critic, mountaineer, explorer, gardener, naturalist, distinguished servant of the State, Gertrude was all of these, and was recognized by experts as an expert in them all." So writes Lady Bell of her stepdaughter, the late Gertrude Bell of Arabia, whose "Letters" she has edited for a respectful and curious world (Boni and Liveright; two volumes: $10). The Uncrowned Queen of Arabia who was the subject of so much rumor and report during and after the war, and who remains perhaps the principal competitor with Colonel T. E. Lawrence for the distinction of having had the most amazing career of all those persons devoted throughout the war to service in outlying places, becomes very knowable indeed in these large volumes. We see her from six to forty-six as a girl in England, as an eager student at Oxford, as a learner of many languages including Persian and Arabic, as a traveler to Persia and an excavator in Asia Minor, as a climber of the most formidable of Alpine peaks, and as almost every other thing save, let me say in passing, a woman in love. We see her at forty-six drawn into the war, which took her eventually to Bagdad where because of her languages and because of her genius she was made Oriental Secretary, assisted brilliantly in the creation of the Kingdom of Iraq and the settlement of the crown upon Feisal, and died at fifty-seven from too much labor for the Museum of Antiquities. We see her always as a brisk, courageous, enthusiastic, affectionate woman whose character is no less astounding than her story—whose character, in fact, is her story.

Gertrude Bell of England and Arabia—for she remained an Englishwoman even in the midst of her efforts for Feisal and in spite of her passion for Persian, Babylonian, and Arabian antiquities—was very decidedly possessed of a mind, but she is most interesting for the activity of her life. Hers was the sort of activity that we have learned to expect every few years from some member of her race—endless activity, passionately directed but inspired I suspect by a touch of desperation. At twenty-one she wrote: "I love talking to people when they really will talk sensibly and about things which one wants to discuss. I am rather inclined to think, however, that it is a dangerous amusement, for one 's so ready to make oneself believe that the things one says and the theories one makes are really guiding principles of one's life, whereas as a matter of fact they are not at all. One suddenly finds that one had formulated some view from which it is very difficult to back out, not because of one's interlocutor but because the mere fact of fitting it with words engraves it upon one's mind. Then one is reduced to the disagreeable necessity of trying even involuntarily to make the facts of one's real life fit into it, thereby involving oneself in a mist of half-truths and half-falsehoods which cling about one's mind do what one will to shake them off." Making due allowance for those fifteen "ones," there is a fine paragraph. But it is not the expression of a contemplative or even of a practical soul. It is the mark rather of one who will go many times around the world in search of the whole truths of experience—and never, of course, quite find them. Such a one was Gertrude Bell; and I doubt whether a more perfect example has recently come on record.

MARK VAN DOREN

A Good Word for California

Lands of the Sun. By Mary Austin. Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.

IN New York and in other great cities one meets people who live as though they recognized no kinship with forms of life outside the human family; as though creation really started on the sixth day and all the rest were irrelevant and unnecessary. Such people scurry in and out of restaurants and theaters, bob up and down in office-building elevators—they are as active as cockroaches in a drain. "This is the life!" they seem to proclaim—indeed they will so proclaim if you ask them.

A kind of life I suppose it is—a life in time but scarcely in space. Such people have about as much spatial poise and content as the tick of a watch. For them the concert of nature is played on two strings—themselves and the barren asphalt they walk on. Surely there is an appalling egoism about such lives, and also, I think, a progressive insanity. This urban robot I am describing hasn't even sense enough to say, when he meets you, "It's a fine day," or "It looks like rain," observations of some color and pertinence as compared to his empty "Hello" or "How's the boy?" Alas, he is so tragically full of himself he hasn't even room enough for the weather.

Whom the gods would destroy they first make insensitive. Not to the meek, exactly, but rather to the sensitive, belongs the earth and the fulness thereof. They win their inheritance simply by being aware of it.

Mary Austin is one of these inheritors. Both for herself and for her readers she has widened the dimensions of life and increased its content by the record of what she has seen and felt in the beautiful places of her native West. "The Lands of the Sun," like "The Land of Little Rain," is a book not merely to be read but to be owned and referred to.

Such books, it seems to me, represent the necessary groundwork of a culture—the spiritual possession of the soil. Not enough of this work has been done—for the West especially. John Muir, Robinson Jeffers, Mary Austin, and perhaps George Sterling—on the work of these four California might base a culture, and probably won't if present portents hold.

Mrs. Austin came to California in 1888, before, as she remarks in her preface, "It was preempted and overrun by the most impotent—culturally and spiritually impotent—society that has ever gotten itself together in any quarter of the

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United States." Her interest is primarily in the landscape; where the human adventure enters it is California's earlier epic which impresses her: "men contriving against the gods for the possession of the earth;" this rather than the contemporary enigma of sun-kissed fatuousness.

In California every prospect pleases; but in this continuous beauty there is a certain troubling redundance and excess. Curiously enough Mrs. Austin's style seems to have caught a little of this infection. Frequently I found myself urging her not to make a literary conquest of this country but to let the mountains, the valleys, the trees and flowers and birds speak with their own clear voices. Nature invariably rejects the too-possessive suitor; a tree or a flower is its own symbol, its own significance. Thoreau and Muir both knew this; so does Mrs. Austin, I suspect. It is merely that occasionally she is betrayed by the impulse to make nature provide the visual pattern for her own subjective desire and need. For the rest, one cannot acknowledge too gratefully the richness and precision of her observation, the devotion with which she has compiled her historical and botanical data, and the genuine emotion which lifts and colors her picture of this land which, for all its human faults and natural faultlessness, one remembers always with wonder and enthusiasm.

JAMES RORTY

The Quality of Grace

The Bridge of San Luis Rey. By Thornton Wilder. A. and C. Boni. $2.50.

THERE exists a certain minor prose quality which, in its purest form, seems to have eluded the most eminent of our present-day fiction writers: I mean grace. Grace, unlike other literary virtues, such as sincerity or strength, is a thing learned. Perhaps it is always the product of a continuous tradition, of a devotion to the masters. In America the absence of a homogeneous fictional tradition may partially account for the fact that our most widely advertised stylists are deficient in this very quality of grace. The elements of grace are almost moral: purity and modesty and quiet. Mr. Cabell, Miss Wylie, and all those other practitioners whom good sense (or snobbishness) has caused to revolt against the school-boy vulgarity of our standard literary idiom, have none the less failed to capture these elements. That is because pure grace is incompatible with mannerism or whimsicality; it is the serene steering of a middle course between the Odyssean rocks of artificiality and ruggedness. In our own time it is almost unexampled. Possibly our pioneer prejudices have laid too much emphasis on what is called a masculine style. Perhaps we have no one to learn from in our own tradition. Then there is another deterrent: the realistic ukase which bids our writers transform themselves into dictaphones for the recording of "sinewy native American speech." Finally there is the fear that so delicate a note as pure grace may be lost amid the blatant and monotonous trumpetings of our contemporary American prose.

Mr. Wilder's very beautiful book, then, possesses an extrinsic as well as an intrinsic value. Intrinsically it is a remarkably confident evocation of the secret springs of half a dozen men, women, and children. But in addition it proves to us that an American, if he be willing to exercise rigorous selection, understatement, and a measured observance of the prose styles of the masters, can create a novel instinct with a pure grace.

To achieve this unique limpidity of style and feeling Mr. Wilder has taken careful thought and made many careful avoidances. The first thing he does is to obviate the possibility of there arising in the reader's mind any vulgar or hackneyed associations. This is effected by a removal of the scene of his novel to an eighteenth-century Peru just barely touched with a gentle unreality. No land of the imagination, this Lima of 1714, for that trick would be too obvious; merely a modest device for arousing in us that sense of purification which is lent by historical remoteness. Then, as grace is not associated with large effects or the complication implicit in a numerous dramatis personae, he reduces his characters to a scant seven or eight—the five who perish when the bridge of San Luis Rey falls, the Perichole whose passions and perversities link delicately the fortunes of those five, and two or three more static personalities to balance the dynamic action of the protagonists. But this mere numerical simplicity is not enough, for grace is achieved through a certain unity, even monotony. It is not generally effected by the depiction of too many emotions. Consequently Mr. Wilder simplifies his feeling-pattern. Though his characters are projected completely and organically, they are for the most part motivated by the single passion of love. There is no schematism here, for this passion expresses itself in almost every conceivable form (except romantic affection) from the almost religious idolatry of little Pepita to the inverse effects of love frustration in the Perichole.

A locale free from impure associations, a parsimonious list of characters, a simplified and coherent emotional material—there is still another device employed by Mr. Wilder to convey a sense of purity. There is a moment in which the love-careers of his five characters reach a psychic turning-point; at that moment they fall from the bridge. Accident? Divine intention? The ruminative and Jesuitical Brother Juniper thinks the latter, but Mr. Wilder does not say. His art knows that to indicate the metaphysical implication underlying his tale is to deepen the sense of mystery. To stress it is to destroy the quality of grace he has so surely built up. He assembles materials so apt for the purpose that he might very well be tempted to furbish up his story and present it as a profound philosophical novel, thus gaining the plaudits of the columnists. But his pen is tipped with the pure gold of an exquisite tact—another word for grace. Just as the simple reticences of his individual sentences offer exactly the correct amount of stimulation to the reader's sensibility, so is his basic conception clothed with a beautiful restraint, lending to his work that gracious and stately modesty we meet with in the old fables of La Fontaine.

Mr. Wilder is not yet an important novelist; but it may be that he decreases the significance of his work by a self-imposed series of limitations. His projects are not ambitious; he refuses to set a complicated or turbulent human scene. Yet there are a sureness, an ease, and an emotional power in this book that indicate more inclusive and far-ranging abilities. There are few young Americans writing today whose development will be watched by the discerning critic with greater hope and confidence.

CLIFTON P. FADIMAN

Tragic Biography

The Life and Death of Sacco and Vanzetti. By Eugene Lyons. International Publishers. $1.50.

FELIX FRANKFURTER'S analysis of the evidence in the Sacco-Vanzetti case was until August 22 the one competent book dealing with the trial. The rest were pamphlets, written in a mingled atmosphere of threat and supplication, telling the story, it is true, but written—for the story was unfinished, and it is unfinished still—with an eye to the diverse elements of money, social force, and legal device to be recruited for the battle.

August 22 having passed, there are those who see no need for a retelling of the story. The New York *Times* spent five pages the day after the legal murder in relating and summarizing all the circumstances. August 22 having passed, there are those who know that, however gallant and thorough was Mr. Frankfurter's book upon the subject, another was needed, as careful in its relation of the legal drama but so setting that drama in the society of our times that the case should be clear for what it was, a minor episode in a world-wide conflict and

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a symbol to the nations of the narrowness and injustice that can prevail in what to the workers of the world was once the land of the free.

No one could have been better fitted than Eugene Lyons to retell the story. As a young newspaperman he was sent to Italy early in the case to examine witnesses for the defense and to meet the Sacco and Vanzetti families in Torremaggiore and Villa Falletto. With an artist's selection and compression he has indeed described the lives and deaths of the two men, their childhoods, their reasons for migration to the legendary America of food and freedom, the work they were able to do in the New England of today.

I find in this book, depicting two very simple and heroic human characters, something that no novel of the fall can offer me; and when it becomes necessary to tell of their slow dying against a background of international agitation and protest Mr. Lyons manages, somehow, to analyze the conflicts between liberal and radical opinion among the sympathizers in a style that is not exposition but is free and running narrative. Mr. Lyons never believed that the case was "a New England conspiracy." He does not write about it in that way. In one slim volume he has written another "American Tragedy," one which is now part of history and from which lessons can be drawn for history in the making. The book has already, fresh from the English presses, been translated into German, Spanish, Russian, and Italian. It has been seized upon for translation because it tells the story of immigrant adventure in the New World as Latin America, Italy, Russia, and Dawes-plan Germany recognizes that world. ERNESTINE EVANS

Gauguin's Letters to His Wife

La Vie sentimentale de Paul Gauguin. Par Jean Dorsenne. Paris: L'Artisan du Livre.

THERE are those admirers of Gauguin who in their naive enthusiasm would have us believe that the man woke one morning and found himself in the throes of an incurable passion to paint. Whereupon he betook himself to that mysterious island in the Pacific where, under perennially blue skies and freed from the vile necessity of having to provide for wife and children, he gave himself up entirely to his genius and his art. They would have us believe that inspiration came upon him suddenly, and that he followed the gospel exhortation with respect to home and kin in all its strict literalness. Nothing can be further from the truth.

In the first place, there is no doubt that from 1873, two years after Gauguin entered the employ of Bertin, brokers at Paris, to 1883, when he resigned, he served a serious apprenticeship as a painter, utilizing every spare moment in the study and perfection of his art. So that when at thirty-five he finally decided to devote himself entirely to painting he was thoroughly convinced of his capabilities and had no doubts about his future success. Indeed, one of the most remarkable things in the artist's life is that through all those harrowing years of want and distress that followed he never lost sight of the real value of his work, never doubted his genius. The desire to paint, then, did not come upon him suddenly; it grew up with him over a period of ten years in the noisy, stuffy atmosphere of the Bourse.

Secondly, contrary to the notion that Gauguin upon quitting Bertin never so much as gave a thought to his family, which would make of him either a man possessed of unusual powers of detachment or a downright scoundrel who abandoned wife and children for a Tahitian strumpet and "un batard café au lait," the intimate letters of Gauguin to his wife now show clearly with what profound and touching concern he followed the fate of his family from the time he was compelled to leave them at Copenhagen to the time of his death. The truth is that the hope of sometime rejoining his family and regaining his wife's esteem was the one thing, next to his art, to help him support all the mental and physical suffering that was his. He touches on it again and again in his letters.

It is the latter phase of this myth which romantic admirers are pleased to spin about the artist—his utter indifference to family ties—that the author undertakes to explode. The story of his development as an artist, which was, to be sure, a gradual process, he leaves out of consideration, touching here and there upon some aspect of it only in so far as it throws a strong light on his family life. For instance, he reserves a chapter on the notebook which Gauguin especially prepared for his daughter Aline but which, alas! the poor girl did not live long enough to see. (A beautiful limited edition of the original "cahier" has just been printed in Paris.) The book consists for the most part of excerpts from the painter's letters to his wife, but these are ordered and arranged with such fine psychological sympathy that one gets something like a complete picture of the truly human side of the artist in that long struggle against poverty and disease.

He takes her into his confidence about his art. He has no doubt about his future or his genius. "I am a great artist," he writes from Tahiti, "you are right. . . . It's because I know it that I have endured so much suffering in order to realize my end; if not, I would have considered myself a brigand—that which I am anyway for many people." Thus Gauguin continues to unburden himself to his wife until the last crushing blow reaches him—the news of the death of his favorite child, Aline. The bitterness it precipitates is too much for husband and wife to bear. His last letter was so hard and inhuman that she never replied. With this tragic rupture is severed the last tie that held Gauguin to Europe. MICHAEL FRAENKEL

Books in Brief

A History of the Life and Death, Virtues and Exploits of General George Washington. By Mason Weems. An American Bookshelf. Macy-Masius. $2.50.

So here is the ever-living Parson Weems again. This time handsomely printed on smooth clear paper, and bound in a cloth cover spangled with golden stars on a blue background. There is an unquenchable vitality in his mess of legends and myths, and their appearance in this latest edition is another proof—if another were needed—of the sickly fragility of truth as compared with the obstinate perseverance of romantic falsehood. But, of course, no one takes Parson Weems seriously nowadays. This edition comes out, doubtless, as merely the reprint of a curious book which many people will want to add to their libraries. In it you will find the hatchet-and-cherry-tree story and other myths of the immortal George. Amusing and interesting, the book is; but, nevertheless, it is a rather depressing object to authors. Why? Because its literary history shows the futility of effort, truth, and research. Parson Weems was not even a passable writer. He was a preacher and a peddler, but his book still lives. On the other hand, Joel Barlow, who lived at the same time as Weems, was a writer of education and culture. He spent his life in writing; he tried to set down the truth as he saw it; he was a man of imagination and feeling—but who has ever heard of Barlow today, outside of a few professors of literature?

Farm Income and Farm Life. A Symposium on the Relation of the Social and Economic Factors in Rural Progress. The University of Chicago Press. $3.

This volume constitutes the report—in symposium form—of a joint committee from the American Country Life Association and the American Farm Economics Association, appointed to study the relations of social and economic factors in rural progress. The conclusion, that economic and social factors "are interesting functions of rural society," is less interesting than are the nearly fifty articles, chiefly by agricultural econ-

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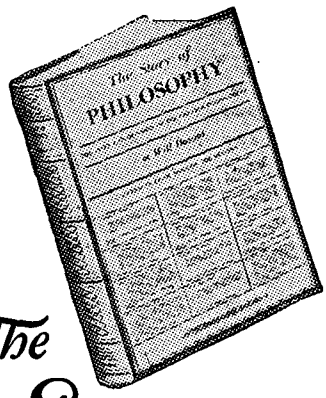

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Now that the new Ford is out we can all get back to reading again, and usher in the American Renaissance on a gear-shift basis.

To forget its editorial labors, *The Inner Sanctum* finally took its plunge into New York night life and actually went to a show—which one, is our secret—only to discover most of the audience reading SIDNEY S. LENZ on *Auction Bridge* in the theatre programs—and MERRYLE S. RUKEYSER, another *Inner Sanctum* author, on how to invest their bridge winnings, according to the sage counsel given in his new book *Financial Advice to A Young Man.*

If you are tired of the "inside" shop-talk about best-sellers in the word business, we're afraid you'll have to be excused from this week's lesson . . . But, thus far, it has been our experience that the reading public can't get nearly enough of it.

For a change, we shall refrain from quoting our old beacon-light, the BAKER AND TAYLOR list. Once a month the book-sellers themselves prepare a list of their own by sending in their confidential and impartial reports to *Publishers' Weekly.* In the list just announced 107 booksellers in 94 cities, representing every nook of the Republic, list the following as the ten best-sellers in the field of general literature.

1.	*Trader Horn*	541%
2.	*"We"*	456%
3.	*Napoleon*	379%
4.	*Mother India*	323%
5.	*What Can A Man Believe*	249%
6.	*The Story of Philosophy*	223%
7.	*Revolt in the Desert*	171%
8.	*The Glorious Adventure*	131%
9.	*Your Money's Worth*	97%
10.	*Transition*	97%

As a matter of hysterical record, *The Inner Sanctum* also points out that the top title on the fiction list, *Jalna,* has a score of 402%.

Trader Horn, however, is *not* the best-seller in such cities as:

Burlington, Vermont; Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Sheboygan, Wisconsin; Knoxville, Tennessee; Salt Lake City, Utah.

WILL DURANT'S new mental autobiography, by the way, is making so much money for the book-sellers that the *Houston Dispatch* refers to it as *Transaction.*

—ESSANDESS

HEALTH SIMPLIFIED

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omists and sociologists, on such topics as the farmer's standard of living, types of agricultural production affecting expenditure and culture, and the economic aspect of rural education. The articles range in type from statistical analysis to agrarian oratory, but very few are without at least suggestive value, and a number contribute significant data to current agricultural discussion. The format of the book, regrettably, is below the standard which one expects in the work of a university press.

Adam and Eve. By John Erskine. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.

Mr. Erskine continues his witty crusade against the American realistic novel. His latest effort indicates an observable sharpening of his conversational technique, but his stoical exclusion of eccentric characters such as the gatekeeper in "Helen," plus the almost complete avoidance of action in favor of dialogue, produce an occasional sense of devitalization. Mr. Erskine has lost none of his satiric edge and irritating reasonableness, but it is probable that the potentialities of his unique method of presentation are approaching exhaustion. It may be that a swift change to a modern background and the abandonment of a slightly schematized legendary material would lend new impetus to his art.

The Vanguard. By Arnold Bennett. George H. Doran Company. $2.

Mr. Bennett trots out his usual impossible millionaire from the Five Towns to serve as the protagonist in a tosh-tosh piece of hammock fiction. Mr. Bennett is the man who once wrote a book called "The Old Wives' Tale."

NOTE. Wyndham Lewis's "Time and Western Man," reviewed by Mr. Krutch in the Holiday Book Number of *The Nation*, will be published here by Harcourt, Brace and Company in February.

Drama

Papa Shaw

FOR more than one reason I am loath to admit that "The Doctor's Dilemma" (Guild Theater) affords a pleasant but not an exciting evening. In the first place I approve heartily of the Guild's habit of producing each year one of its author's plays which most of us have had few opportunities to see upon the stage; and in the second place I am far from lacking in piety toward Papa Shaw, for I do not expect ever to forget the day when, as a freshman in college, with a hearty and tough-minded contempt for the Thomas Carlyle and the Matthew Arnold of English 1, I stumbled upon "Man and Superman." Since our study of literature began with the Victorians and proceeded from them slowly backward in the general direction of "Beowulf," it is not likely that I should ever have heard of Shaw from my mentors, and if Providence had not taken a hand I should probably have completed my education by painfully construing "Hwaet we gardena in geare-dagum—" and speculating as to the letters which are missing from the scorched edge of MS Cotton Vitellius A. 15.

But the hand of God led me to Shaw. When I came to the end of Act One in "Man and Superman" I closed the book for a moment to give thanks, but I did not pause again until I had read all the plays which its dazzling author had then written. It was not I think that Shaw was changing my ideas—one does not take so eagerly to a writer who is performing that painful process—but rather that he was confirming them. I was amazed to discover that any one allowed to get into print could say such mischievously pertinent things, and I longed to go forth and beat most of the people whom I knew over the head with his collected works. Since that day I have grown more tolerant of other generations, and though Carlyle still merely irritates me I can now even understand what Matthew Arnold is talking about. But there were many things that had to be got settled before I could take time to understand the thoughts of others, and Shaw said them for me. It was only from that day forward that I could take literature seriously or believe that an author was being candid with his reader.

Obviously, then, I am not lacking in piety toward the author of "The Doctor's Dilemma"; but neither my own piety nor the skill of the Guild company, long practiced in interpreting Shaw, can make it a very good play. Alfred Lunt plays the painter right up to the hilt; Lynn Fontanne as his wife gets all there is to be got out of a rather flimsy part; and Ernest Travers seems, as he always does, Shaw's middle-class Englishman come to life; but they cannot make the play either very rapid or very shocking. The satire on the doctor is reminiscent of every satirist who ever lived, and as to the thesis—that a talented rogue is more worth saving than an amiable mediocrity—one accepts it too really to become very much aroused. This painter would have to be very unpleasant indeed to constitute a real problem, and the difficulty is simply that Shaw is too much of a gentleman ever to make any of his scoundrels very convincing. The trick which he employed in "The Devil's Disciple" when he made his hero turn out to be a disciple of God after all is not really a trick but something which answers the needs of something fundamentally tender-minded in Shaw himself—to the same something which made him refuse to admit that Don Juan was a sensualist, which made him suddenly transform Mrs. George into a misunderstood woman, and which leads him to whitewash every villain. What, after all, is so appalling about the hero of "The Doctor's Dilemma"? He has not been brought up according to the gentleman's code, and being poor he borrows money whenever he gets a chance; but that is about all. When the time comes for his villainy to roar he roars you as gently as any sucking dove. He doesn't even frighten the ladies, and therefore there is no real dilemma. Perhaps English audiences felt in 1906 that a man might conceivably deserve the death penalty for not playing cricket according to the Eton rules, but a generation which has learned to stomach the hero of "The Moon and Sixpence" finds no cause for making a great pother about a man as fundamentally decent as Shaw's painter. It is willing to forgive genius a great deal more than he is guilty of, and when it considers how pure all the people in Shaw's plays are it is almost ready—this would be the most unkindest cut of all—to accuse him of respectably shrinking from what used to be called "the facts of life." If he should ever write a play about Sodom and Gomorrah he would probably tell us—as the old lady told the Sunday-school scholars—that the sin of the citizens of the cities of the plain was playing cards and sitting up late at night.

None of the other recent dramatic events call for much comment. "The Racket" (Ambassador Theater) is a good melodrama, somewhat confused by its references to Chicago politics; and in "The Marquise" (Biltmore Theater) Billie Burke, piping her childish treble, flutters her way through the three acts of Noel Coward's unsuccessful attempt to be delicately naughty. "Take the Air" (Waldorf Theater) is a tawdry, tasteless musical comedy in which Trini loses most of her flavor in the effort to conform to the American taste. I can, however, recommend the new edition of "Artists and Models" (Winter Garden). This has become a standardized product, but one is always sure of getting one's money's worth in expert dancing, lavish ensembles, and slightly off-color jokes. The new edition is even rather better than usual.

Correction: In a previous issue an unfortunate interchange of names was made. Constance Collier, not Margaret Anglin, is appearing in "John," and Miss Anglin is appearing in the "Electra" of Sophocles.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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International Relations Section

Peace Out of Russia

THE Soviet Disarmament Proposals were offered on behalf of the USSR by M. Litvinov to the League of Nations Preparatory Disarmament Commission at Geneva on November 30. The text of the proposals and M. Litvinov's resolution, which we print by courtesy of the New York *Herald Tribune,* follow:

The Government of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, having been unable to participate in three sessions of the Preparatory Commission for a disarmament conference, has intrusted its delegation to the fourth session of the Preparatory Commission with the task of making a declaration covering all questions connected with the problem of disarmament.

The Soviet Government adheres to the opinion it has always held, that under the capitalist system no grounds exist for counting upon the removal of the causes which give rise to armed conflicts. Militarism and big navies are essentially natural consequences of the capitalist system. By the very fact of their increase they intensify existing differences, giving a vast impetus to all potential quarrels and inevitably convert these into armed conflicts.

The peoples of all countries, however, enfeebled and impoverished by the imperialistic World War, are imbued with a determination to struggle against new imperialist wars and to guarantee peace between nations. This is precisely what makes it possible for the Soviet to accept the invitation of the League, the latter having expressed itself in favor of disarmament. In so doing the Soviet Government demonstrates before the whole world its will to peace between nations and makes clear to all the real aspirations and true desires of the capitalist states in regard to disarmament.

Despite the fact that the World War was called a "war to end war," the whole history of post-war international relations has been one of unintermittent and systematic increase of armed forces in the capitalist states and of a vast increase in the general burden of militarism. So far none of the solemn promises of the League has been even partially fulfilled, while in all of its activities in this regard the League has systematically evaded setting the question in a practical light.

All of the work done by the Preparatory Commission in this regard has been purely of a decorative nature. Indeed, the League only approached the question of general disarmament in 1924. It decided to call a conference on general disarmament on May 1, 1925, but to the present not only has the matter of disarmament not advanced a single step, but no date for a conference has even been fixed.

Likewise, the League has been fruitlessly engaged upon the question of the limitation of war budgets since 1920. Reluctance to put into practice the policy of disarmament, both on the part of the League and individual imperialist states, was manifested both in the methods adopted and the alternation of the questions of disarmament and general guaranties, while simultaneous attempts are made to sum up in detail all the factors determining the armed power of the various countries concerned.

Such a setting of the question, evoking endless and fruitless arguments on so-called military potentials, affords opportunity for an indefinite postponement of the fundamental and decisive question of the actual dimensions of disarmament. There can be no doubt that by setting the question thus at the coming disarmament conference not only will it be impossible to achieve a curtailment of existing armaments, but the states belonging to the League may even receive legal sanction for increasing armaments.

The Soviet has systematically endeavored to get the question of disarmament definitely and practically formulated. Its endeavors have, however, always encountered determined resistance from other states. The Soviet Government, the only one to show in deeds its will to peace and disarmament, was not admitted to the Washington Conference of 1921 and 1922, devoted to questions of the curtailment of marine armaments. The proposal for general disarmament made by the Soviet delegation at the Genoa Conference was rejected by the conference.

Despite this opposition, the Soviet never has relaxed its determined endeavors in regard to disarmament. In December, 1922, a conference was called at Moscow by the Soviet of representatives of the border states for a joint discussion of the problem of the proportional curtailment of armaments. The Soviet agreed to a considerable diminution of armaments, despite the fact that this would not affect many of the Great Powers, always ready, whether under obligation of treaties or not, to come to the assistance of the other countries represented at the Moscow conference should these be involved in conflicts with the Soviet.

A definite and thorough scheme for a diminution of armaments was proposed at that conference by the Soviet. This was, however, rejected. Despite the skeptical attitude of the Soviet toward the labors of the League, it accepted the invitation of December 12, 1925, to attend the coming disarmament conference and only the Soviet-Swiss conflict evoked by the assassination of Vorowsky and the subsequent acquittal of the assassin by a Swiss court has prevented the Soviet from attending the previous sessions of the Preparatory Commission.

In now sending a delegation to the fourth session of the Preparatory Commission the Government has authorized it to present a scheme for general and complete disarmament. The Soviet delegation is authorized by its Government to propose the complete abolition of all land, marine, and air forces.

The Soviet Government suggests the following measures for the realization of this proposal:

A. The dissolution of all land, sea, and air forces and the non-admittance of their existence in any concealed form whatsoever;

B. The destruction of all weapons, military supplies, means of chemical warfare, and all other forms of armament and means of destruction in possession of troops or military or general stores;

C. The scrapping of all warships and military air vessels;

D. The discontinuance of calling citizens for military training, either in armies or public bodies;

E. Legislation for the abolition of military service, either compulsory, voluntary, or recruited;

F. Legislation prohibiting the calling up of trained reserves;

G. The destruction of fortresses and naval and air bases;

H. The scrapping of military plants, factories, and war industry plants in the general industrial world;

I. The discontinuance of assigning funds for military purposes, both state budgets and those of public bodies;

[No "J" is indicated];

K. The abolition of military, naval, and air ministries, the dissolution of general staffs and all kinds of military administrations, departments, and institutions;

L. The legislative prohibition of military propaganda, the military training of populations, and military education both by state and public bodies;

M. The legislative prohibition of patenting of all kinds of armaments and means of destruction with a view to the removal of the incentive to the invention of the same;

N. Legislation making the infringement of any of the above stipulations a grave crime against the state;

O. The withdrawal or corresponding alteration of all legislative acts, both of a national and an international scope, infringing the above stipulations.

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The Soviet delegation is empowered to propose the fulfilment of the above program of complete disarmament as soon as the respective convention comes into force in order that all necessary measures for the destruction of military stores may be completed in a year's time. The Soviet Government considers that the above scheme for the execution of complete disarmament is the simplest and the best conducive to peace.

In the case of capitalist states rejecting the immediate abolition of standing armies the Soviet, in its desire to facilitate the achievement of a practical agreement, proposes a program of complete disarmament to be carried out simultaneously by all the contracting states by gradual stages during a period of four years, the first stage to be accomplished in the course of the coming year.

Under this proposal national funds freed from war budgets are to be employed in each state at its own discretion, but exclusively for productive and cultural purposes. While insisting upon the views just stated, the delegation is nevertheless ready to participate in any and every discussion of the question of the limitation of armaments whenever practical measures really leading to disarmament are proposed.

The delegation declares that the Soviet Government fully subscribes to the convention on the prohibition of the application to military purposes of chemical and bacteriological substances and processes and expresses its readiness to sign the convention immediately.

While insisting on an early date being fixed for ratification by all states, it considers that, in order to insure the practicability of the convention, it is necessary to raise the question of the establishment of control by the workers in those chemical industries capable of being rapidly converted to war purposes in states which have a highly developed chemical industry.

M. Litvinov then offered the following resolution:

WHEREAS, The existence of armaments and their tendency to growth by their very nature inevitably lead to armed conflicts between nations, diverting workers and peasants from peaceful and productive labor and bringing in their train countless disasters, and

WHEREAS, Armed force is a weapon in the hands of the Great Powers for the oppression of peoples of small and colonial countries, and

WHEREAS, Complete abolition of armaments is at present the only real means of guaranteeing security and affording a guaranty against the outbreak of war, this fourth session of the Preparatory Commission for Disarmament resolves:

1. To proceed immediately to the working out in detail of a draft convention for complete general disarmament on the principles proposed by the Soviet Union delegation, and

2. Proposes the convocation not later than March, 1928, of a Disarmament Conference for the discussion and confirmation of the terms provided in Clause 1.

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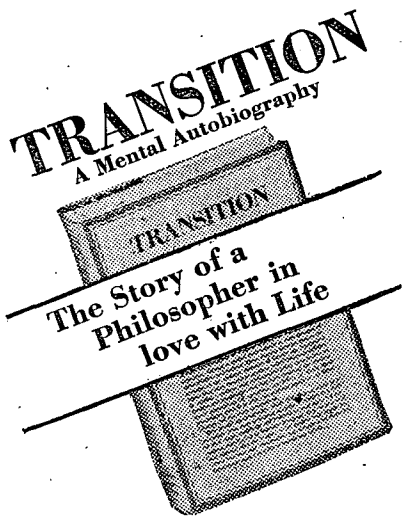

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